The Mystery *of* Frances Farrington

BY

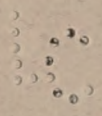
Elizabeth Banks
Author of
"The Autobiography of a Newspaper Girl"

New York
1909

The Mystery
of
Frances Farrington

BY

Elizabeth Banks
Author of
"The Autobiography of a Newspaper Girl"



New York
1909

CHAPTER I

TO INTRODUCE MISS ALLISON

Being a humourist, Margaret Allison took her work very seriously.

The fact that she was about the only person who seemed to do so appealed forcibly to her sense of humour, and, sometimes over the density of the editors who printed her stories and the public who read them, she laughed quietly up her sleeve—somewhere in the vicinity of her shoulder, for she always wore elbow sleeves. She found them convenient, since she did all her work with a typewriter, and, besides, she adored neatness and despised home-made paper cuffs, having a well-shaped forearm.

She had other attractions of a personal sort, and even the least observant and most critical of her acquaintances were wont to speak of her as a handsome, well-groomed girl of medium height. She disliked Bohemianism and the look that so often comes of intellectuality, frankly admitting that she felt more real pleasure at a compliment to her personal appearance than one that took note of what she termed her "giant intellect."

She was somewhat of an actress, and her skill as a linguist came little short of genius. During her several trips abroad she had passed in Paris as a real Parisienne, without in the least trying to do so—indeed unconsciously, until a French cabinet minister, whom she met at an embassy ball, asked her in a low, confidential tone, what she thought of "these Americans." In Madrid she donned a mantilla, and spoke Spanish and shrugged her shoulders with such native fluency that many of her own country-people whom she met there addressed her as "Señorita;" and when she visited Rome she passed among certain Italians, who, perhaps, were not too observant, as a young patrician woman of their own race.

In London no bus-driver, suspecting her nationality, invited her to sit beside him in the place of honour at his jerky right elbow, no cabby tried to exact from her a double fare for the distance between Charing Cross and Oxford Circle. Quietly and all unobserved, except for her handsome face and her graceful carriage. she toured about for a year among the English provinces, standing even in the garden of Ann Hathaway's cottage without exciting among her own country-people or the English themselves a suspicion of her nationality. Fitly to describe her, one must have called her Cosmopolite.

Returning from her third trip to England and the Continent, she wrote an international farce, a society skit, which was immediately produced by an actor-manager. The play ran into the hundreds of nights in New York before it went on the road, and her royalties rose into the thousands. With the proceeds she poured favours upon her needy and greedy distant relations and various other beneficiaries, and she moved into an expensive apartment hotel, where she had a shower-bath and a private drawing-room with old French prints on the green cartridge walls, and she engaged a visiting-maid to run ribbons in her lingerie after laundering, and she got a Chinchilla pillow muff.

And still she was not happy, for she wanted to do the big things in literature, rather than the light ones; she longed to turn people's laughter to tears, their rejoicings to wailings, and their skipping polkas into melancholy minuets.

Of course, nobody suspected her state of mind, unless she herself told them of what they would have considered her defection from her true self and her natural calling. Had she not laughing eyes and a merry way with her? Did not people, both men and women, go to her when they were in trouble and wished to be cheered up, also to borrow money? At such times she would endeavour to point out to them the compensations in their lot, and then turning to her cheque-book, she would say, "You'll let me have it back by the first, won't you?"

They always said they would, but they never did. She used to declare it was a bad plan to lend your friends money, because when they could not pay you back they began to avoid you and ended by hating you. Everybody laughed when she said it, but nobody noted the little catch in her voice. Had they noted it, they would have been not merely surprised, but puzzled beyond all solving.

She was the sort of woman who, against her will, even against her prohibition, gained the confidences of others while offering none of her own. Women told her of their failures, their unhappy homes, their unrequited loves, their dearest sins, and, as she spoke soft words to them, consoling them, they never guessed that she herself might be feeling wounds for which she knew no healing balm.

Though she had laughing eyes, her face in repose was strangely sad. "Let me paint you!" said an English artist, who had met her at a salon in London.

"As what?" she had asked half-jestingly.

"As the woman of the saddest face I have ever seen!" he replied. And he painted her, and underneath the portrait which hung now in a Bond Street gallery, he had placed the title. "The Woman and Her Mask." When people passed it by hastily, they invariably returned to take a second and longer look at it, and they would go away to ponder upon the face and upon the title.

Before the writing of the international farce Margaret Allison's work was known upon the stage and was successful, and it was the experience she had in getting colour for one of the characters in an earlier comedy that helped to deepen the sadness which the observant artist had seen back of the smile in her eyes. Her play was, in part, a take-off upon circumstantial evidence as a factor in the condemnation of an innocent man, and in her search for realism she had spent many weeks attending trials at the various law courts. In the criminal branch she had seen a woman condemned to long imprisonment for a crime which she, Margaret Allison, felt sure she had never committed, though all the circumstantial evidence pointed unmis-

takably to the woman s guilt. She was about to lift her voice in protest against the judge's sentence, when suddenly she felt the futility of such an outbreak in a court-room.

Then she had gone away tearless, but with beating heart. She was not a "weepy" woman, and perhaps it was their unshed tears that gave her eyes their wondrous brightness.

It was after this experience that she began to pay frequent visits to the law courts, and often made the round of the Tombs and other prisons, finding in such places a wealth of material for stories and articles. She became known as an uncompromising opponent of circumstantial evidence and a friend of convicts and ex-convicts. Many a poor soul, turned adrift from prison, was met by the outer door by Margaret Allison, ready to lend or give him money and conduct him to a place of employment. Often within a few months she would hear of such protégés as having been again convicted and returned to prison, and then she would say, "Well, what wonder? People did not trust them enough!"

One of her protégés was Annette Lemoyne, for whom she had secured a place as chambermaid at the Hotel Illington, asking especially that she might be assigned to the floor where her own suite of rooms was situated. Only Carolyn Blaine, Margaret's closest and only intimate woman friend, knew that Annette had been in prison for stealing a former mistress's ring. Carolyn had insisted that the manager and the housekeeper should be warned of Annette's antecedents.

"No," said Margaret; "they would be so narrow that they would not give her a trial if I told them." And the little maid's secret was kept.

Nor was Annette the only one closely connected wtih Margaret's daily life whose antecedents could have been described as "shady." There was Captain Jinks, her French poodle dog, beloved friend and devoted companion, of history most interesting and unique.

In his very early years Captain Jinks' master was one Daniel Johnson, a member of a travelling show, who had trained him as a puppy in circus tricks, a training all in kindness, for Daniel loved him. He had named him Captain Jinks and had taught him to dance and illustrate the popular song of that name at the circus. The poodle jumped through hoops; played the piano; touched his top-knot with his fore-paw when told to salute the ladies; said his prayers; played "dead"; barked a low bass or a high tenor at command; and always for his performances he was rewarded with chocolate creams, of which he became inordinately fond.

At the circus he had always pleased his audience best with a game called "pick-pocket," in which he would crawl slowly after the circus men, deftly taking from their pockets such things as watches, handkerchiefs, purses, and sometimes he would pick the pockets of ladies in the audience by their special request, receiving chocolate creams as reward. He was taught to restore all such things to their owners at a nod from Daniel. But there came a day when Daniel failed to nod for the restoring of a roll of greenbacks which Captain Jinks had removed ever so stealthily from the pocket of the owner of the circus, with the result that he and his master were dismissed by the infuriated proprietor with threats of imprisonment for Daniel if he ever showed up again.

Then the two had taken a long journey across country roads to New York, where Captain Jinks was taught a new trick—to poke his nose into the muffs of ladies who walked on the crowded shopping streets. Then "loot" began to be plentiful, and Captain Jinks and his master thrived upon the proceeds of their united endeavor.

There had come a cold winter day when somebody in the crowd had shoved Captain Jinks fairly against Margaret Allison, just as he had extracted a purse from her stunning Chinchilla muff. Looking up quickly she saw the strange dog carrying the purse to a strange man, as had also a policeman, who placed his hand on Daniel Johnson's shoulder in token of arrest. Hastening over to the policeman, Margaret said, "You have made a mistake! I am this man's friend, and why should I not give my purse to the dog to carry to him?" all the while looking curiously into the shifting eyes of Daniel Johnson. Then, laughing nervously, Margaret extended her hand to the young man. "I'll take it back, now," she said, closing her fingers over the purse. "Perhaps you don't remember that I have moved to the Hotel Illington. Come around and see me to-night and be sure to bring the dog. Yes, I am still Miss Allison!"

With that she had vanished in the crowd, and that night Daniel Johnson stood in her doorway, saying, "I ain't worth it, lady, the lie you told to save me, but I'm going to be worth it out in New Zealand, so help me God! But I can't take my pal along, and, besides, the cunning little devil is a continual temptation to me to let him pick pockets, so I ask you to take him to have and to hold for ever. I love him better than anything else in God's earth, and I know you'll be good to him!"

So it was that Captain Jinks had come into the possession of the lady who was now his idol, though at first it had seemed that his heart would break for the love of Daniel. But that was five long years ago. Daily now he was solicitously tended and brushed and combed and made splendid for walks and drives in the park. He loved his luxurious apartments; his cosy-corner with its many pillows; he gloried in the sheen of his satin ribbons, and it was his joy to be attended once a month at his rooms by his own private barber, who shaved and ruffled and fluted him, and made bracelets about his forepaws.

One of the new tricks Margaret had taught him was to count in four different languages, so that like his mistress, he had become something of a linguist. He performed his various "turns" and did whatever duty seemed nearest to him upon what might be termed the "rule of three" whether that number were called out to him in English, French, German, or Spanish. He had learned that from that command there was no appeal, and that whether he had placed upon his tongue a bit of nasty medicine or the most appetizing morsel, he must swallow without parley at the exclamation of his lady, "Three!", "Trois!", "Drei!", or "Tres!" Carolyn Blaine always declared that there was even a noted difference in the sound of Captain Jinks' bark, with which he announced that he had obeyed the command,

to correspond with the language in which it was given.

He often went with his lady to the Tombs; he entertained the poor children of the slums with his wonderful tricks; he delighted little cripples with his performances, and he was always ready to do his "turns" at the various benefits for charity's sake. But there was one turn he had never been encouraged to do, and which he had now quite forgotten. It was that of "pick-pocketing." Altogether, Captain Jinks was very like his lady, a combination of worldling and philanthropist.

It was not until Margaret was twenty-nine, when she was at the height of her success as a comedy writer, and had attained to a remarkable degree of brilliancy and beauty as a woman, that she fell in love, or, as she herself expressed it discovered that she had "grown in love." Up to that time many men had admired her, and several had thought they loved her. In a certain measure some of them had appealed to her fancy, and she had enjoyed their comradeship, and had not been averse to a certain amount of their judicious flattery. She was quite frank in declaring that she "liked to be liked" by men. It had been so in the beginning of her associations with Samuel Blackmore, a smart young mining engineer a few years her senior. She had liked him to like her, and she had enjoyed liking him.

"I don't believe in 'falling in love'!" she had once exclaimed in conversation with him.

"What then?" he had asked in the most careless manner that a designing man could affect.

"Two persons should grow in love. That is the safe and sane and by far the most delightful way," she answered, and, having tact, the aspiring engineer laid his plans.

They had been successful, so successful that when he went down to Peru to look after what he then grimly called his "misfortunes" in the Cajamarca Mines, Margaret Allison, in the midst of many friends and admirers, felt a lonely woman. This loneliness she never confided to any one, not even to Carolyn Blaine. But Captain Jinks often had a suspicion that something was amiss with his adored lady, when she would suddenly look up from her writing, and, grabbing her banjo, command him to dance, dance to a weird Peruvian air which she strummed upon it. Somehow, it seemed to her, that she was carried on the wings of this music to that arid southern country where Blackmore laboured and planned and longed. On his return, his face beaming as he told her of his faith in the final success of his mining project, they became engaged, with the expectation of marrying within the year.

Then came the catastrophe, the turning point in her career, the thing that strengthened her love for her lover, embittered her to the all-consuming point against "circumstantial evidence" as real evidence, and awakened within her the knowledge that she could hate.

A disgruntled stockholder in the Cajamarca Mining Company carried what he called "evidence" to the District Attorney to show that while Samuel Blackmore cried "Gold! Gold!" there was no gold in the Cajamarca Mines, and the District Attorney having an old score to settle with Blackmore, who had once interfered with one of his political ambitions, snatched delightedly at the plausible excuse for making it hot for the engineer. Before the Grand Jury he carried his points to explain to them that Blackmore had undertaken the exploitation of these mines, and had formed his company merely to get gold from the pockets of confiding investors, such gold being the only gold either in sight or hidden, for was it not well known, asked the District Attorney, that there was only lead and antimony to be found in the Coast Cordilleras of Peru? Declaring that all the circumstantial evidence proved Blackmore's knowledge of the worthlessness of the Cajamarca Mines, he demanded an indictment against him.

Somehow the Grand Jury found a flaw in the evidence, pronouncing it insufficient to indict, and Blackmore came through the ordeal with some people believing in him, others doubting him, and, financially, as he put it, "clean as a whistle"—that is to say, penniless.

Women in general, when they love a man, belong to one of two classes—the motherly or the loverly. Love awakens the maternal instinct or it appeals to the mating instinct. The difference is shown in a dozen ways. The loverly woman may kill the lover who has been unfaithful to her; the motherly woman will take him in her arms and forgive him his sins; the loverly woman will delight in rumpling her lover's hair, and giving him a sudden kiss upon the lips; the motherly woman will smooth down his hair and kiss him on the forehead; the loverly woman sees in him her future husband; the motherly woman thinks of him as the father of her unborn children.

There is another class, a smaller one, rare and blessed, of women in love. They are those who unite in one soul and one body all the best attributes of the motherly and the loverly, basking thus in the full glory of love, needing never to fear unfaith. It was to this class that Margaret Allison belonged.

When on the night of the Grand Jury's failure to indict Sam Blackmore. his handsome boyish face all clouded, with his six feet of stature, his hundred and ninety pounds of avoirdupois, stood looking at his sweetheart with a half-suppressed longing in his eyes, and told her that their marriage must be postponed for perhaps a couple of years while he went down to Peru to bring up the gold which was to be the evidence of his integrity, the loverly instinct in Margaret Allison came to the surface. She gave him a good hard shake and laughingly said, "Nonsense, Sam! I'm determined to be married at once. What money I've got saved you can sink into your mines, and I'm going to Peru to live with you in an adobe hut and write Peruvian romances, and my 'keep' will be almost nothing."

"You in an adobe hut! You miles and miles away from civilization!" he exclaimed, yet not able to disguise the joy that would shine in his eyes at the mere thought of the nearness of his heart's desire. Then suddenly his look changed. He was as one who had been taken to the mountain-top and shown great glories, then tempted, but not to his undoing.

"No, Margaret," he said. "I will not take you there. You don't know what you ask.

I will release you, or you must wait."

One terrified look into his set face revealed to her that from this decision there was no appeal, and she answered softly, almost meekly—

"I will wait!"

Out of the silence that followed she spoke again.

"Sam, I wish our engagement to be kept a secret till the very day of our marriage. I have some work to do that I can do better if nobody knows about it."

"Yes, Margaret, only you remember that John Henderson knows it already. He's the only one."

"It's all right with good old John, but nobody else, Sam. I think not even Carolyn —well, possibly, Carolyn later on."

"Nobody else, then!" he said, laughing. "But what's the work?"

"That I can't tell you."

"All right!" He laughed. "Something good I know, and something foolish I suspect. The establishment of a home for ex-convicts, with five-course dinners and a band of music?"

She did not reply to his joke, but turned away her head, and spoke as though apropos of nothing and quite carelessly—

"I believe that the workings of the District Attorney's office are utterly bad and self-seeking, conscienceless, and without good red blood in the veins of a single one of the concern."

"I agree with you, Margaret," he answered, not noting that still she kept her head turned so that he could not see her face. "It's not truth, not justice, not right, but the game, oh, the game, they're after, with him, the most bloodthirsty, at the head. The whole prosecution system in this country is wrong anyway. The prosecutor goes about seeking scalps to hang on his belt—what matter how he gets them! It is his business, so he argues, to convict, that is, to bag the game, even if the facts are all against him. In England, in this respect at least, they do things more kindly and justly. Counsel for the Crown, in prosecuting, gives the defendant every opportunity to clear himself of the charge against him, and is actually sorry when he fails to put up a good case. It's rotten over here, especially in New York, absolutely rotten!"

"Yes" answered Margaret, and now she spoke with shaking voice between clenched teeth, and her hands that had freed themselves from his clasp were now digging their nails the one into the other. In a moment she knew her lover would be turning her about to look into her face, he would be grabbing her hands again and kissing them, and she knew she must not let him, lest he see the hatred that she knew must be darkening her face, the light of determination that had gathered in her eyes. She understood herself perfectly. She knew that now the maternal instinct was uppermost, the instinct to defend and avenge her lover, who now became her dear, abused, shamefully wronged child. Suddenly, to hide her face, she pressed it against his breast.

"Sam," she said in a hoarse voice, "the damnable workings of the District Attorney's office should be exposed, and the District Attorney himself should stand discredited and degraded before the whole world. He must never be re-elected."

"True, sweetheart!" agreed Sam. "All these things should be done, but who's to do 'em?"

He did not hear her answer. He thought he heard her sigh in helplessness and discouragement, though through her firmly set lips there had escaped a muffled "I!" which was like a curse.

A moment later she lifted a calm, smiling face to her lover, and her fingers fluttered through his blond hair, lovingly patting upon his forehead a lock that was sometimes orderly, sometimes in rebellion, according to the state of his temper, and which she herself had named his "warlock."

"I think I'll get at my serious work in real earnest while you're away," she said.

"Well, if you must," he smiled; "but how will you make the editors publish it, the light-headed idiots?"

"Oh, some time they will publish it," she said quietly.

In bidding him good-night, she put up her mouth to be kissed, but deliberately he passed it by, resting his lips tenderly, reverently, upon her hair, for he knew the limits of his strength.

"The time is so long that we must wait, sweetheart!" he said chokingly, and she knew he suffered, and he knew she understood.

That night she sat long before her dressing-table, drawing the brush in and out among the reddish brown strands of her wonderful hair. Suddenly she took the comb and parted it in the middle, smoothing it over her ears. "Now I am a Madonna!" she said, as she looked into the glass and viewed the effect. She uncoiled it from the nape of her neck, and twisted it into a tight little knot, pointing straight outward, her front hair brushed back, yet careless-wise. "Psyche!" she cried, and now she laughed at her own reflection. Undoing it again, she plaited her hair in two long braids, tied them at bottom with a ribbon, allowed some wavy locks to fall girlishly about her ears and forehead, folded her hands calmly over her bosom, and walked up and down before the glass. "Behold, I am Gretchen, a German peasant maid of sixteen summers!" she said, and certainly she looked it.

Again she sat down, unplaited her hair, and dressed it in another fashion, with puffs and rolls, snatching from a cut-glass box a powder-puff, and dashed it over her head. "I am a lady of the Court of Louis XVI!" she said, nodding smilingly into the mirror. Suddenly, in the midst of removing the hairpins, she jumped from the chair. Her face became alight with a greater joy, and out into the drawing-room she rushed, her powdered hair falling over her shoulders. She turned on the full glow of the electric lights under their many pink shades, and sitting down to the piano, brought her hands upon the keys with a resounding crash, which roused Captain Jinks from his sleep in the cosy-corner.

"Your own song and dance, Captain Jinks, your very own song!" she cried, bringing forth a bar of swinging melody which made the poodle give a yelp of delight.

"I am Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines,
I often live beyond my means,
I sport young ladies in their teens,
To cut a dash in the Army!"

Up and down marched the poodle. Back and forth in perfect time went his ruffled paws upon the polished floor. At the fifth line,

"I teach the ladies how to dance!"

he lifted his front paws and hoisted himself on his hind legs and began dancing, at first solemnly and slowly, then joyously and quickly, his large brown eyes fairly brimming with mischief.

"I feed my horse good corn and beans!"

sang Margaret, while Captain Jinks, swaggering and important, folded his forepaws across his chest, and stalked over to a table, lifting from it with his teeth a wooden cigar, which he began to puff as he marched. As Margaret finished the chorus he stopped dancing, folded his paws more tightly, and shook his body from side to side. Suddenly he flew on his hind legs to the piano, and greeted his lady with a soulful "Wuff-wuff!" She stretched one hand from the keys to a vase above, snatching a flower, and into the orange ribbon that tied his top-knot she pushed a yellow daffodil. Then again, with fluttering curls and prancing feet, the dog dashed about the room, stopping for an instant to pick up a cane very daintily with his teeth.

The music ceased. Margaret turned breathlessly from the piano and watched Captain Jinks, who wearied not. He presented arms, fired, went on dress parade, rested at ease, and with no music to guide, there was not a halt in the rhythm of his movements. She watched him with a peculiar smile upon her face, as though fascinated by his litheness and dexterity, yet with her thoughts afar. Then, as the charming little rascal paused for the bold wink with which he always punctuated the line—

"For I'm their pet in the Army!"

she flew to him with hugs and pats, and the chocolate creams in which his soul delighted.

CHAPTER II.

PRESENTING MISS FRANCES FENNIMORE FARRINGTON.

Mrs. Herbert, late of London, now lodging-house keeper in Washington Square, New York, sat on the top chair of her second-floor front hall, and fanned herself with her Belfast linen apron.

Mrs. Herbert herself called this particular floor the "first" in accordance with English custom, also the hall was a "passage," and, asked her name, she would tell you quite distinctly that it was " 'Erbert."

It was thus that she had introduced herself to the lady who had rung her door bell the day before, inquiring if she took lodgers after the English fashion, letting to each person a bedroom and sitting-room, and serving the meals, or parts of meals as required, privately to the lodger in her private sitting-room on her private dining-table, furnishing also a handy sideboard in the room for the storing of such things as pickles, sauces, and wines.

Mrs. Herbert had started back with glad eyes and joyous face. "Madam," she said, "I beg you to hexcuse me for jumping at you so, but the sound of your voice do go right through my hold 'eart and takes me back 'ome. You hare from hold Hengland, hare you not, Madam?"

At first the lady had seemed upon the point of laughing, then catching herself, had said with a subdued smile—

"And so you can tell so easily that I am from England? Now, I wish to get into lodgings at once. The thought of the New York boarding-house of which I have heard so many English visitors to this country complain, is quite unbearable to me. I heard of you through friends, and I understood that you would let lodgings in the same way that they are let in London."

"That I would, ma'am, hif hanybody would take them, but heverybody 'ere wants to heat at a long table. That I won't 'ave in my hown 'ome, destroying my hown privacy as well as theirs, so I've just been hobliged to let my rooms to gentlemen who take their meals houtside."

"But you will let me have two connecting rooms, will you not, and serve me such meals as I require?"

"That I will, that is, hif my 'umble 'ouse will suit your ladyship."

"Thank you! But don't call me 'your ladyship'! I will give you my card, and should you desire a reference—"

"Oh no, your ladyship—that is to say madam, not hat hall, not hat hall!" broke in Mrs. Herbert, and she held the bit of pasteboard which the lady handed to her so close to her eyes that it almost touched her lashes, whereat the lady smiled again. "A fine hold English name it does me good to look hat, madam, and proper it's writ, and it do my 'eart good to 'ear the sound of hit!"

The card read—

"MISS FRANCES FENNIMORE FARRINGTON."

Then the lady had gone away, promising to send her luggage in the evening and herself appear on the following morning.

Now she had taken up her abode in the Washington Square house, and Mrs. Herbert, having worked all the previous day and a good part of the previous night to get the two connecting rooms in what she called "happle-pie horder," sat now on the top stair, tired and perspiring.

The new lodger was bustling about her rooms, unpacking various odds and ends from a thoroughly English-looking hip bath-tub, painted white on the inside, yellow on the outside, and pushing it under the bed out of sight, she never having seemed to take into consideration the fact that in Mrs. Herbert's house there were two modern porcelain bath-tubs fixed in white-tiled bathrooms on the second and third floors. Between intervals of unpacking, she would occasionally look out of the front window toward the square, dotted with children and nursemaids and tramps. Then she sat down in a rocking chair, cautiously, as though, being somewhat unfamiliar with it, she rather suspected its balancing properties, and when she had got fairly to swaying her body gently back and forth, there was a timid knock on the door, and she answered, "Come!"

A red-cheeked English girl of fifteen or sixteen entered, and looked toward the trunks.

"Mother says shall I unpack your boxes, please miss?" she said. "I'm 'Arriet 'Erbert, miss," and she curtsied respectfully, going over and unstrapping the trunks.

"Thank you, Harriet," smiled the lady, "I can unpack them quite nicely myself, but how very English it is of you to think of offering!"

"Thank you, miss!" replied the girl; "and if you won't have me unpack, mother says when would you like luncheon?"

"About one o'clock, or a little after," replied the lodger.

"And mother says what would you 'ave, miss?"

"A nice English luncheon! Tell your

mother to prepare me just what she thinks I shall appreciate as thoroughly English."

"Yes, miss! Thank you, miss!" replied the young girl; and again she curtsied and left the room.

"Oh, mother, ain't she 'ome-like?" exclaimed Harriet when she had arrived at the basement kitchen, where Mrs. Herbert had now betaken herself. "I curtsied to her, mother; do you mind?"

"Mind?" repeated Mrs. Herbert. "Do I mind your rememberin' your manners and not forgettin' what's due your betters? What I do say about this country is that folks is always forgettin' manners, 'Arriet"—and here she nodded mysteriously to her daughter—"hit's my hopinion she's a ladyship."

"But, mother, I've called her 'miss,' and I mustn't do that if she's a ladyship!" exclaimed Harriet, almost dropping the plate she had in her hand. "But I don't see what call' you've got to say that. She do speak soft and low and 'ave a way of bowing like Lady Annabel, which used to live at the 'All at Maidstone; but gentry speaks and bows so, the same as ladyships."

"Has hif I was so hignorant not to know that!" retorted her mother scornfully; "but, mind you, I got it in my 'ead she's a ladyship, and when I gets a thing in my 'ead it's generally so, as you might know by hexperience, 'Arriet. And if she's a ladyship, it's nobody's business but 'er hown, say I; and now be stirrin' yourself and take the 'ot water to 'er."

"'Ot water!" repeated Harriet, with widened eyes.

Mrs. Herbert burst out laughing. "Well, it do show what 'avin' your hown 'ome folks about you again can do for your wits. I was that convinced I was back in Hengland that I forgot there was 'ot and cold running water in the basin of 'er room—a very hunealthy thing it is, too!"

She bustled about the kitchen. "Five-and-twenty to one!" she remarked. "'Arriet, go to Rickert's and get two mutton chops, the real 'ome kind, mind you, or as much like the 'ome kind as they 'ave 'ere. 'Er ladyship shall 'ave luncheon that shall remind 'er of 'ome if your mother's not mistaken. She shall 'ave gooseberry fool, and peas with a sprig o' mint. To think o' cookin' peas without mint—it's that improper!"

At one o'clock Harriet climbed the stairs with a tray of dishes. She laid the table in the new lodger's sitting-room with great care, forgetting not three forks and three knives—the latter of real Sheffield steel—on either side of the plate, and placing a vase of what looked like English market flowers in the centre.

When she had fetched the second tray containing the food, she stepped to the bedroom, and with a gentle tap and a respectful courtesy, said "Luncheon is served, miss!" and as she curtsied, the new lodger noted that her head was topped with a tiny cap.

"A cap!" she exclaimed, smiling. "Are they worn here, then?"

Harriet blushed. "I never wore one before, miss. My mother said it would make you feel 'ome-like, miss. You see, miss, we don't keep any maid, they're so expensive, and besides, my mother, 'aving been a proper servant 'erself and knowing 'er place, she couldn't abide the kind they 'ave 'ere."

The lady was about to speak as though in protest when the girl interrupted eagerly—

"I don't mind it, miss, indeed I don't. I'll 'ave to wear one when I go back to England and go into service."

"You will go back, then?" asked the lady, as she seated herself in front of the chops.

"Yes, miss, I think so, in two or three years. We've been here about a year now, and we like 'ome best."

"I hardly believe you will," said Miss Farrington, smiling. "I have a fancy you will become a good American. They tell us that English people do grow to like it after stopping here some time," and then she sighed, as though an unhappy memory or anticipation oppressed her.

The little maid, in accordance with her mother's instructions, stood back near the small sideboard, and silently waited till she should be asked to bring the sweets, and as she stood with a good view of the lady's back and profile she studied her new lodger with somewhat of awesome interest.

She saw a very straight figure, strictly tailor-made, and she decided that the lady was too tall and that she wore her hair done too high. Her gown, at which the girl gazed with admiration, was of blue and white pin-stripes. It was of the plain, somewhat severe style affected by Englishwomen of the upper classes for morning wear and travelling. Its cut was extremely good, and its every line and curve bespoke Bond Street.

Her eyes were dark, yet it was difficult to tell whether they were hazel or brown, and, when her face was in repose, they seemed to veil an unexpressed sorrow. One could not help feeling that she had a good forehead that should be exhibited to the smallest fraction of the smallest inch, and that it were a pity she did not know this, so that she would wear her hair brushed back from it, instead of allowing certain locks to fall over it in bang-like fashion. Her features were straight and clear-cut, and, except when she smiled, the whole effect of her face and bearing was almost stiffly patrician.

As to her age, one would certainly have to refer to her as young, but it would have been difficult to fix with any degree of certainty the approximate number of her years, except to say that she might be anywhere between twenty-five and thirty-five.

When she finished her sweet and drank her coffee, she smiled at Harriet, thanking her for the delightful luncheon, and announcing that she would be going out to dinner, and might not return until late, she continued—

"Harriet, while I think of it, I will tell you that I must never be disturbed in my rooms unless I ring for you, and I am always 'out' to all visitors, whoever they may be, unless I tell you in advance that I am expecting someone. I will ring for you when I want breakfast, or wish to give an order for any other meal, and when I wish my rooms done up. Otherwise, I wish to be left in perfect quiet and never disturbed, for I have come here to do some very important work. I am engaged in writing."

"Yes, miss, thank you, miss,curtsied Harriet, backing out of the room with her tray.

"I think she might be a ladyship," remarked Harriet with perturbed brow, as she descended to her mother in the kitchen,

"and I think she's runned away from him, and scorned his money and the family emeralds!"

"Land sakes! What is the child talking about!" exclaimed the startled Mrs. Herbert. "Runned away from who?"

"From 'is lordship, because 'e was cruel," explained Harriet. "She's that sweet and grand and sorrowful, mother!"

"'Arriet 'Erbert," said her mother solemnly, "don't you let me' ear hanything like that from you again, and don't you bring hany more books to this 'ouse from that public libr'y which fills you 'ead with such hideas! I won't 'ave it!" and Mrs. Herbert stalked majestically to the sink.

Unaware of the romantic atmosphere with which the imaginative minds of the two women in the kitchen had already enveloped her, the new lodger, before going out for a walk, sat for a long time at the front window of her sitting-room peering into Washington Square. It was a forward spring, and the trees were laden with budding leaves, screening many of the park benches from view. Had she sat there at five o'clock, still peering out, she could not have discerned Margaret Allison and her dog pacing up and down one of the Square's pathways, nor could she have heard Margaret murmur with a serio-comic air.

"Mark the spot, Captain Jinks; mark the house where dwells our rival!"

And all this happened on the very day when all New York was laughing over a story which appeared in a prominent weekly, entitled, "The Law as a 'Hass.'" It was a brilliant thing, wittily cutting, a take-off on circumstantial evidence, and, without a pretence of the thinnest of veils, a studied attack upon the District Attorney's office. As they laughed over it, people wondered how Margaret Allison had dared so to hold up the head of that important office to ridicule, though certainly they admitted that lately there had been shown an excess of zeal that had led to a number of wrong persons being indicted and tried.

The District Attorney read it, and, not being entirely without a sense of humour, he himself laughed at intervals between luncheon courses at Pontin's. He was somewhat acquainted with Margaret Allison's work, and he suspected its authorship before he saw her signature. She had written other stories tending to an exposition of law-court mistakes, but there was something about this that marked it as a thing by itself. There was a certain something that seemed to show a pen dipped in gall before the lines were written. Yet how could he suspect that this was the beginning of a new campaign to be waged against him with the object of stripping from him the last vestige of the community's honour and his own self-respect? He would have been interested, but his interest would have been of the derisive, scornful sort, had he been told that against him there was arrayed a woman, alone and unassisted, who had sworn to encompass his downfall; that this woman had not a shadow of a doubt of her own success in accomplishing her purpose; that she had been aroused to a great sense of civic duty by the one motive that can inspire a woman to do great deeds for the good of humanity—love of her man and a wrong to avenge in his behalf—and that whereas once she had worked but sleepily, now her eyelids had been touched by the Hand of the Great Awakener.

"A bit personal!" said the District Attorney, smiling, handing the story over to one of his assistants who sat opposite him. Then he added, half-curiously, "You might almost think it was written by one of my political enemies. Yet I never met the lady in my life, though I have seen her occasionally from afar haunting the court rooms and the Tombs entrance."

"Yes, a bit personal, as you say," returned the assistant when he had finished reading it; and at two o'clock, in Part I of the Criminal Branch, they were busy with the prosecution in the case of the People *versus* Childers, and the District Attorney had forgotten all about it.

CHAPTER III

"THE BEST FRIEND A MAN CAN HAVE——"

Sam Blackmore's face was lighted with a satisfied smile, as well as with the fire of the forge over which he was leaning, at the rear end of his adobe hut in the camp of the Cajamarca Mining Company on the western slope of the west coast range of the Peruvian Andes.

It was a few minutes after the camp dinner hour, a bit of time daily snatched for resting at ease among the miners. Some were jolly, some moody, some cracked jokes, some sang songs of melancholy, which they tried to accompany on ancient shell trumpets and bone and cane flutes, mementoes of the old civilization which had passed away with the Incas. It was sorry music.

"Perdida yo la esperanza,
Y el corazon palpitanta——"

"Stop it!" cried one of the company, throwing some dry alfalfa into the very mouth of the singer. "This is 'oh be joyful' day, and if you can't sing dance tunes, don't sing at all—not that it would be much loss to the camp if your warbling should cease for all time! Look at Blackmore there, stewing gold in the only frying-pan!"

"Talk about sad things," piped up a pleasant voice that told of Kent in England, "that frying-pan is the saddest thing I can think about. Nobody objected to Blackmore's using it in his retorting, if he would return it to the cook whole, but not having enough separate bits of iron, what with his two old spades and the rim of the stew-pot, he's smashed the frying-pan into three pieces, so he could land three separate buttons on it!"

The speaker was Lawrence, also a mining engineer, and Blackmore's most valued assistant. He was tall and athletic, and his once ruddy face was now tanned to an even orange. His eyes sparkled and his voice rang loud as he called into the hut—

"I say, there, Blackmore, your cazuela's getting cold! For heaven's sake, take a bit of nourishment and stretch your legs! You sit there like the ghost of Atahualpa mourning over lost gold!"

"Joying over *found* gold, you mean," said Blackmore, appearing in the doorway. "But, yes, I will try some of the stew. Here, Felipe!"

"Si, señor!" cried a young half-breed, with a red handkerchief tied around his waist in lieu of cook's apron, and running up with a great pot and a ladle. "Muy

bien cazuela; no, señor?"

"Muy bien, sure!" answered Sam, as he stood in the doorway and began eating from a tin soup plate. It was a toothsome viand, and worthy of Felipe's skill, needing knife, fork, and spoon for its consumption. There was a large bit of mutton floating about in the liquor, a whole egg poached, green peas, and beans, cabbage leaves, slices of white turnip, celery, onions, and potatoes

It constituted the whole dinner. One needed nothing more after partaking of this, the national dish of which the Peruvians are so rightly proud.

"More, señor; no?" asked Felipe anxiously, and again he filled the tin plate.

Within fifteen minutes Sam was back at his forge. There was still left some playtime for the others, but not for him.

There was a curious collection of things in his sanctum, this place where he was now retorting gold in the most primeval fashion. First he squeezed the amalgam through chamois leather, then he would grab one of a dozen potatoes, cutting off the end and scooping a hole in it, then into the hole inserting the round ball of amalgam and turning the potato on to the retorting plate, which happened to be a three-cornered piece of the ever-to-be-lamented camp frying-pan. Then heating gradually the forge, he pushed his broken iron with its potato tower into the midst of the heat, by which means he got a button of gold on the frying-pan and globules of mercury in the hollow of the potato.

On he worked, his very blood tingling with delight—not at the sight of the gold as gold, but at the thought of what the demonstration of his ability to find gold would mean, right here, where he had all along declared it was, embedded in the quartz from six to ten ounces to the ton, in this particular spot, about midway between Guadelupe and the town of Cajamarca.

It was not a place to please the eye, this mining camp and its surroundings. Only mountain peaks pierced into the gray mottled clouds for miles around, all dry and arid, with no green to brighten the scene. Grey herbs and parched cacti grew upon the mountain sides, and only occasionally did a cactus burst into scarlet among the grey. There was little animal life, and never a bird except the white ruffled condor, soaring, vulture-like, lazily over the camp. Scraggy prospis trees were dotted here and there, supplying sticks and twigs for the building of the bush-beds of the miners. About on the ground were strewn skeletons of alpacas, vicuñas, and llamas, mingled with an occasional human skull that grinned as though in derision at the seekers after the paltry metal, the need, if not the love, of which makes all mankind akin.

In the adobe hut, within arm's reach o the young engineer, who was assayer, metallurgist, manager, all in one, hung a stuffed guana bird which had wandered thus far from the coast and from its kind to find a sort of immortality in some museum where it finally would be deposited. Near it depended a necklace of monkey-teeth and three beetle-wing bracelets, almost touching a group of poisoned arrows.

The fifth gold button was lying upon the broken spade, and Blackmore looked up smilingly into the face of a tall, cadaverous man, some years his senior, who had quietly entered the hut. His countenance might have been called grim were it not for the twinkle in his eyes, as he said—

"Well, Sam, the buttons are for Margaret, I suppose, as well as the nugget?"

"Sure, Henderson! What more proper than that the little girl should have the first output from the Margaret Mine?"

John Henderson, of Cincinnati, had known Margaret Allison from her early schooldays, and for Sam himself he had a half-paternal affection. It was he who had introduced Margaret to her first editor, and his wife, the sweetest of aspiring match-makers, had brought about the first meeting between Margaret and Sam. Shortly after the two had told her of their engagement, Mrs. Henderson had died, and now her widowed husband took a lively interest in the fortunes of his two devoted friends. He was attracted to Margaret by a certain sweetness in her temperament as well as by her brilliant wit and keen humour. He basked in the light of Sam's sunny face, swore by the honour and integrity of Sam's soul, while a particular element in Sam's character was a source of continual wonder and amusement to him. This was a certain sort of loyalty in Sam's make-up which made it impossible for him ever to assume a critical attitude toward the friends he loved best. It was Henderson's contention that Sam's loyalty to his friends at times made his point of view a bit one-sided; that where his friends were concerned it was an utter impossibility for him to look all around a subject. This weakness, if such it could be called, was the engineer's only one. While refusing to see the faults of his friends, he was wont to ferret out hitherto unsuspected virtues in his enemies. For injury which the latter might do him he bore no malice, though he would pounce upon them roundly if they attacked those he held dear. This attitude had been amusingly illustrated only recently in the camp. In a dispute, one of the discharged miners had hastily called Blackmore a liar, which insinuation had brought from the engineer but the command, "Get out, I'm busy!"

"And so's Lawrence a liar!" continued the man, and then Sam knocked him down.

When Blackmore had been almost indicted for misrepresenting his mines, Henderson had been out of the country, but he had come hurrying back at the news of the misfortune that had befallen his friend, and started secretly to get together the working capital which was so sorely needed after the dissatisfaction of certain stockholders. Now, the Cajamarca Mining Company was on its feet again; Sam had cabled him that the quartz was rich with gold, the first shaft having been sunk on the wrong side of the lode, and Henderson had hastened to Peru to take a look at the operations. Now he was ready to return to Cincinnati by way of New York, and the mule which was to help him for the first part of his journey stood ready bridled at the far end of the camp.

Henderson's twinkle deepened as he viewed again the broken bits of retorting iron. "Did you crush the quartz yourself, too, Sam?" he asked jocosely.

"No, the new crusher works splendidly and the reduction mills are going on without any gold-thieving, but the retorting machine got out of gear just at the psy-

chological moment, so I turned to the potatoes. They're all right!" he announced proudly.

He was now at work on the last ball of amalgam, squeezing it with might and main and clenched teeth. The last piece of chamois leather had broken (and he had demanded from Henderson the half of his strong linen handkerchief for the process. He had a knack of finding always his tools to hand when he needed them. He could make an excellent filter out of a nail can and some broken stones. He could extract water from the roots of plants; manufacture beds from grain sacks and sticks; make soap from wood-ashes and tallow-candle ends; manufacture a slush-lamp from waste bacon-rinds and a strip of his trousers-lining.

The thing he could not abide was procrastination and delay. To the man under him who did the things he ought not to do he was far more merciful than to him who left undone the things he ought to have done. Why one should desire to put off till to-morrow the thing that demanded doing to-day was one of the problems that ever puzzled him, and that he lived and kept his health and his sunny nature in Peru, the Land of Manana, even making himself the adored Señor of the half-breed and Peruvian diggers, was the wonder of wonders.

"Manana! Manana, si Señor, Manana!" at first cried Felipe, the camp cook, and Padre Pedro, the curious little priest who had joined the camp as "chaplain" when the American engineer had suggested to him that he needed his influence to keep the half-breeds in order. But now they only murmured it softly, by way of habit, and it was as though they replied, "Very well, sir!" instead of "To-morrow, to-morrow, Señor!"

Padre Pedro was most useful about the camp. He it was who managed the llamas, those camels of the Andes, to a nicety, gauging always to the uttermost ounce the weight that these helpful beasts would carry, for they drew the line at an hundred pounds. Add an ounce to that hundredth pound and they budged not. They knew their limit and were not to be imposed upon. Let one hundred and one pounds need to be carried, and a pack-mule must be brought out and laden to accompany them on the way. Padre Pedro had learned to calculate a hundred pounds' weight to the last ounce, and was the overseer when journeys were to be made and provisions to be hauled. With his coarse brown surtout rolled up in a sort of bustle round his waist, his little body flew about hither and thither among the miners, helping at whatever work there was for him to do, nursing the ailing, praying with the sinners who had broken the Eleventh Commandment, and worshipping as his god, though he realized it not, Sam Blackmore, Americano.

There is in Peru a belief that a pack-mule will never move till he is beaten, and that he will stop moving once the beating ceases, so those who ride or drive these animals carry always a club cut from a tree, with which to belabour the mule, first on one side, then on the other in sort of rhythmic motion.

"Damn you, Felipe, you miserable Cholo! Let that poor beast alone!" cried Blackmore one day, as his faithful servant sat upon an undersized white mule, ready to carry some needful things from the Margaret Mine to the Maria Mine.

"Him got no soul, he no Christian, Señor!" replied Felipe, smiling into his master's face as though to say if the soul were lacking, it matter not that the body be abused.

Sam pondered upon this excuse all the while he tried to abolish the beating-club from the camp. It seemed useless. He knew that the minute his back was turned the belabouring of the mules was on. Suddenly, one Sunday afternoon when Padre Pedro was about to conduct religious services for those of his own people and his own faith, Sam called the little priest to him and commanded him to take this text, which with all due solemnity he read aloud from a Spanish Bible—

"The merciful man is merciful to his beast, *which also hath a soul!*"

The little priest looked bewildered. "I have not learned it so, Señor!" he said respectfully.

"That's because your Bible is Peruvian Spanish, and this is Castilian Spanish!" replied Sam loftily.

"Si, Señor?" returned Padre Pedro doubtfully, scratching the tonsure of his head.

The sermon was duly preached, Sam sitting in the audience on a quartz rock, to hear that it was properly done. Once during the sermon his eye met that of Padre Pedro, and perhaps he only fancied that the priest winked ever so slightly. In any event the beating-club disappeared from the camp, and the mules had cause to bray a blessing on Sam's original rendering of the Scriptures.

It was Padre Pedro who was to accompany Henderson on a part of the journey to be taken mule-back, and now as the two Americans sat together in their final talk, the priest stood respectfully in the distance.

"You'll see Margaret at once?" said Sam, inquiringly. "Tell her what I didn't have time to write in the letter, that she can have an image of Captain Jinks cut out of the nugget, and she might have some real proper buttons made for a shirt-waist out of these I send. Explain to her the potato process of retorting. It'll interest her. To think she actually tried to insist on marrying me and coming down here to live in an adobe hut!"

He turned away his face for an instant to hide a dimness that had come to his eyes. Then he began packing the bits of gold and the nugget into a little leather bag for Henderson to carry suspended around his neck, during the pack-mule journey towards the coast.

"My God! What it will mean to be vindicated, Henderson!" he said. "To get out of debt, to look one's tailor squarely in the eye, to take a flier in Wall Street with a clear conscience though I'm not sure but knowing I was able to lose would spoil the fun. Margaret says so!"

He laughed softly. "Did you ever see anyone with that girl's imagination? She says that if everything in life were sure and steady and without risk it would lose all fascination; that the way to enjoy life is to have your money on the horse that you notice is just a little behind; in the stock that you're pretty sure of, but not quite! I say, Henderson, did you read that story of hers in the copy

of MacLean's you brought me? Sparkle? Why, it was like champagne, and yet she actually is unhappy because the editors won't hear of her doing another kind of work. You know how keen she is on doing the tragic side—she calls it 'touching the world's heart-strings'?"

"Yes," answered Henderson, looking curiously at Sam's face, "and I'm of the opinion that she'll do it."

"Well, of course, if she wants to give up her comedy writing, there'll be nothing to prevent her writing tragedies and novels with purposes to her heart's content a year from now when we're married, but I'm going to make an engagement with her that she is to write a light and airy trifle once a week for my especial benefit. She needn't have them published if she doesn't want to, but I've got to have 'em."

"She's working on the tragic vein for all that's in her," replied Henderson. "She showed me two or three of her immense stories just before I came away, stories that had then been rejected by a dozen different editors, and she gritted her teeth and said they'd publish them yet. Indeed she was more determined than ever when I left New York, for a new star has appeared in the literary horizon there, a woman who's turning out precisely the sort of stories that Margaret has been trying to get published for years. Farrington, the woman's name is, a new English writer, they say, Frances Fennimore Farrington."

"Oh!" snapped Sam; "I remember wading through two of her stories the other night. They were in those magazines you brought. I didn't think much of them—can't compare with Margaret's work that the dam-fool editors have rejected."

Henderson laughed. The twinkle in his eye deepened, and would not leave it even after his face had become straight. "You are prejudiced, Sam!" he said.

"No; I wouldn't allow my love for Margaret to prejudice my literary judgment, I assure you!" Sam answered solemnly, whereupon Henderson drew back his head and roared. Then his eyes wandered to a shelf whereon Sam kept his literary treasures—a volume of Shakespeare and one of Tennyson, the Spanish Bible from which he instructed Padre Pedro, a few treatises on mining, and the complete works of Margaret Allison. From all the books the covers had been torn, to lighten them as baggage. Sam took down one of Margaret's books and turned lovingly to a short story, much thumb-marked. "Margaret's comedy is of the kind that makes you laugh and cry at the same time. This little thing, now, was published as a comedy, but I defy anybody to read it and ever forget it, and he'll think of it with tears running down a red face that's been laughing. I lend her books to the men—that's the reason I tore the title-pages with her name out of them. Didn't want any suspicion going around the camp. The fellows would soon connect the name of the girl with the name of Margaret Mine. You see nobody knows of our engagement but you, unless Margaret decided to tell her friend, Carolyn Blaine."

"Yes, I understand," said Henderson. Now his face was sober, the twinkle almost gone. "She didn't tell you why she didn't want it known, did she?"

"No; she said she had some work to do that she couldn't do if it were known we were engaged. She didn't seem to want to explain, so I let it go at that. Besides, secrecy is better till I am thoroughly on my feet. By the way, I wish, Henderson, you'd see to sending me some of the weekly papers and a few of the Sundays. I like to know what's going on in the world. Margaret used to send all the best of them, but now she has stopped them. In her last letter she said she was afraid the reading of them would distract my mind."

"They might, that's so," said Henderson musingly; then he remarked solemnly—

"She loves you, Sam!"

"You mean that as a piece of news?" asked the engineer, with a broad smile of proud possession.

"No, only as something for you to remember later on," returned Henderson briefly. "But now I'm ready for the mule and Padre Pedro."

As the travellers started away from the camp, the miners were returning to their underground work. A light was in their eyes, a smile was on their faces, the light and smile of hope. As Padre Pedro and Henderson moved out upon the slow descent of the trail, snatches of their favorite work-song were carried afar—

"Gold, gold, gold,
I love to hear it jingle!
Gold, gold, gold,
It makes my fingers tingle——"

"Ah, it does that, Padre Pedro!" said Henderson, addressing the priest, who rode ahead of him. Carefully, skilfully, yet all wanting in swiftness, the mules moved on.

"The best friend a man can have,
Is gold, gold, gold"

came now the faint voices of the miners.

"The Señor no like those words which end the seenging," remarked Padre Pedro, turning round and facing Henderson. "Eet make him swear and say, 'Damn lie!' " and Henderson pondered. He could not know that at such times the image of his sweetheart, Margaret Allison, and of himself as a true and tried friend, flitted suddenly into Sam Blackmore's vision, as something far above the value of the yellow metal for which he dug.

CHAPTER IV.

A FRIENDSHIP "BETWIXT LIKENESS AND UNLIKENESS."

Slow-witted persons, who thought they knew Carolyn Blaine and Margaret Allison, always referred to the friendship between them as being "thoroughly inconsistent." They did not understand that inconsistency could be the only possible consistent trait in a nature like Margaret Allison's.

In many ways the two young women were as far apart as the poles, and most especially were they so in their religious views. Margaret was known among her acquaintances as the Magnificent Pagan, who variously shocked them by the broad, and what some called "unmoral," outlook upon life, and awed them by her religious fervor. Doubtless the person who came nearest to understanding her in this particular was the only clergyman whom she counted among her friends, one Joseph Tyler, an unfrocked piest, expelled from his Church for heresy. The Little Dominie, as Margaret had named him, lived now a from hand-to-mouth existence on the East Side, where

she often joined him in his work among those whom he termed "the underserving poor."

"You see," said he one day, "they need our help much more than the deserving ones, who, at least, have the approval of their healthy consciences. In hunger, in debt, or in sin, it is no comfort to remember that we brought it on ourselves!" and Margaret laughed at the Little Dominie's ready wit.

Carolyn Blaine, the young high school teacher, loved Margaret beyond all human kind. She had her own brothers and sisters of the blood,dependents upon her, whom she worked hard to support, yet none was so dear to her as Margaret. There were times when she failed to understand her brilliant friend, still at such times she worshipped, albeit blindly. A rigid Churchwoman, accepting unquestioningly the faith in which she had been reared both at home and in boarding school, she still felt that salvation was outside as well as within the Church, and she counted Margaret Allison as one of the elect.

Their friendship now was of many years' standing. It had lasted, or rather it had progressed, from their boarding-school days. Fifteen or sixteen years ago, on the first day of Margaret's boarding-school life, Carolyn had noticed her seated on the first stone of the seminary's broad steps, with tears of homesickness slowly trickling down her cheeks and into the blue-and-white polka-dot dress which she wore. Carolyn, who had arrived at the school a fortnight in advance, hesitated somewhat unsteadily in her pacing up and down the gravel walk, and then walked firmly over to the new scholar. Holding out her hands. and looking her squarely in the eyes, she said—

"I'd like to be friends with you, now and always. Somehow, I think I've got to be."

"You won't like me," the little girl answered, looking her squarely back in the eyes.

"Yes, I shall," contradicted the little Carolyn.

"How long have you been here?" asked the polka-dotted little girl, as though to change the subject.

"Two weeks now. You're late for term, you know."

"How many rules have you broken?" went on the new scholar.

Carolyn stared in surprise. "None! You mustn't get the wrong idea about boarding-school rules. They're all just rules, just and fair and square."

"Humph! I'm going to break every one of 'em before I graduate! I hate rules. If there weren't any rules, everybody would always do right."

"Oh, what a funny idea!" laughed little Carolyn. "If there were no rules, everybody would always do wrong, but they wouldn't know it was wrong."

"Well, I'm bound to break all the rules, anyway. See, here's a list of 'em, which I'm going to tack on my closet door, and every time I get one broken I'll put a little cross before it. In that way I'll always known how many I've broken and how many are yet to be broken."

The small anarchist stretched out a large sheet of stiff paper upon her lap. "They're twenty-nine," she announced, after counting. "Four years into twenty-nine goes seven times and one over. That means I'm to break seven a year and one to carry. I mean I must break seven for three years and eight in the fourth year. Taken altogether, twenty-nine rules seem a lot. They make me raring, tearing mad to look at 'em, but when I divide 'em up like that, I think I can stand it. It's not even one a month, so breaking 'em can't interfere awfully much with my studies."

Carolyn Blaine, at that time aged thirteen and eight months, stood looking at Margaret Allison, just thirteen and a half, with a mouth that seemed prised open with amazement. Margaret looked back half tearfully, half defiantly. "I'd like to be friends, and I'd like you to like me better than any other girl in the school," she said, "but I thought I'd be honest and tell you about the rules." Again she smoothed out the abhorrent paper on her lap.

"You could break every one of 'em, and be a perfectly honest, kind girl," she announced finally. "Now, it can't be a sin to talk out of the third storey window to a girl in the croquet lawn, can it?"

"It's a sin because the rule says not to do it, and it's a sort of cheating and leads to lying," was Carolyn's reply.

"My, no!" exclaimed Margaret, her polka-dotted chest heaving with horror. "I hope you don't think I'd ever tell a lie to save myself. Lying is so mean, so low! I wouldn't tell a lie, no, I wouldn't—tell a lie——"

For a moment the child seemed lost in an argument with herself. Then she sat up very straight. "I think," she said, holding her head very erect, "I have just now told a lie, and it's the first lie I ever told in my life. I told you a lie when I said I would never tell a lie."

At this astounding and somewhat contradictory declaration, Carolyn Blaine did not waver nor shrink back. Her look became one of faith without understanding. Then she put out her hand and let it wander lovingly over the auburn-tinged hair of her new schoolmate who, thus encouraged, went on with her declaration of principles.

"I never told a lie but once, and that was just now when I said I wouldn't tell a lie, because sometime I know I might tell a lie—a great big whopping one that would do a lot of good—a beautiful, grand, noble lie that would make somebody happier and better for it. But I wouldn't tell a nasty, sneaking lie, and if they ever ask me if I talked out of the window I'll say I did, because I certainly intend to do it. There! That's what I mean."

Little Carolyn sat down on the step and took Margaret's hand. "We shall be great friends," she said sweetly, "but we shall never agree, but it won't make any difference about loving. Still, I know that right's right, and wrong's wrong, and to tell the truth is right, and to tell a lie is wrong! My father says so, and he knows, because my father is a good man!"

"We shall be great friends, but we shall never agree!" Now, years after, grown to womanhood, the prophecy was fulfilled. "It won't make any difference about loving!" No, it had not, and Carolyn Blaine, pacing now up and down, not on the gravel walk, but in the great hall outside Margaret's apartment at the Hotel Illington,

thanked God for the fulfilment of her quaint childish prophecy. She thought of the beauty of their friendship, the strength, the breadth, and the depth of it, the ever-growing love between them as the years had come and gone. They had grown apart even farther in opinion about many things, but love had increased. In certain ways Carolyn was as rigid, as uncompromising as ever. With her, still, right was right, wrong was wrong, while with Margaret wrong seemed sometimes to be right and right seemed sometimes to be wrong, from Carolyn's point of view.

There was the little chambermaid at the hotel. How could Margaret reconcile it with her conscience not to explain that she had been in prison? There were her many other ex-convict protégés for whom she secured situations, herself standing as reference for their honesty, and often being robbed by those she helped, yet never attempting to have them sent back to prison. "No, I won't prosecute the poor wretches. Prison life is not reformatory—it only makes them worse," she would say.

"Oh, Margaret, you encourage crime, and you discourage truth!" Carolyn would exclaim.

"In the immortal words of Pilate, What is Truth?" asked Margaret one day.

"Truth is the Ultimate Principle, God!" returned Carolyn. "That is why honesty is so essential. God being Truth, I must do nothing to oppose Truth. If I do, I cannot win out. I must go to pieces."

"Sounds like a geometrical theorem!" laughed Margaret. "The square of the Hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides. You can't govern mankind by a formula like that, and one of these days you yourself will go to pieces over the very rule that you declare keeps you whole."

Carolyn laughed softly as she thought of this reply of Margaret's, as again she began walking nervously up and down the hall. Occasionally she would stop at the door, give the knob a vigorous rattle, listen breathlessly, and resume her wanderings.

It was very strange, these continual absences of Margaret from her rooms these several weeks past. Carolyn was accustomed to running in and out with little ceremony, never giving her name at the hotel office, but finding her way directly to the apartment occupied by her friend.

"Captain Jinks, are you there?" she asked softly, placing her lips to the keyhole. In answer there came a half-suppressed sigh, then a subdued patter of paws on the polished surfaces which the rugs did not cover, then a suspicious sniffing at the door, an audible sign of disappointment, and a return patter-patter, which grew softer and fainter as it receded into a farther room, and Carolyn knew that Margaret's guardian was alone, and impatiently awaiting his lady's return.

Just then she heard the merry voice of Margaret, who had whisked out of the elevator and was striding toward her.

"Poor thing!" piped Margaret. "Did she have to wait in the hallways?"

"Miss Gadabout!" retorted Carolyn. "Half the time you're out now when I come, or else you pretend to be!"

"Busy these days, Carolyn!" laughed Margaret, turning her key and receiving the embraces of Captain Jinks, who had heard her voice from afar, and was found standing on his hind legs at the very entrance. "My new play is to be put on shortly, and, among other things, I'm trying to coach that stupid little actress into a dim understanding of the principal part."

"You mean your new comedy?" screamed Carolyn, clapping her hands.

"I certainly don't mean my old tragedy, which is there in the drawer, just returned from the seventh theatrical manager!" snapped Margaret. The smile had gone from her face, which suddenly seemed to have absorbed from the desk drawer the tragedy of which she spoke.

"Oh, Margaret, don't take it like that!" exclaimed Carolyn. "Still, I know how hard it is that your best work should not be appreciated. Sometimes I swear within my soul, when I think of it. But one of these days, dear, one of these days!"

"Yes! One of these days!" mimicked Margaret viciously; "but I do declare I'll this minute dismiss it from my mind, and enjoy the gifts the gods do bestow. Look at this cheque for a thousand dollars from MacLean's Magazine. They've bought all my 'Little Court Comedies.' "

Carolyn laughed. "I suspect that every one of the 'little comedies' is a tragedy in disguise!"

"So it is," returned Margaret, "but the idiots don't know that. They only take it for granted that, being by Margaret Allison, the Humourist, it must be to laugh, so they laugh. That's my revenge on this imbecile generation of magazine editors."

"Oh, well, pour me some tea, dear, and tell me about your play. What actress is this you are coaching for the leading rôle?"

"Helen Morton. In so far as her appearance is concerned it seems as though she were made for the part, or the part for her."

"But she's never appeared in really high comedy before, has she?"

"No, and that's just the trouble. Never anything but melodrama, and even at that the pool little soul has had hard luck, and been stranded on the road twice within the year. I used my influence to get her this part, for, as I said, she looks it to perfection, and I am going to make a fine comedy actress of her, but she must act this part as I tell her."

"Are you not afraid she'll be rather wooden if she has no conception of it herself?"

"Oh, she has conception enough, rather too much, and that's been the worry to-day. I just told her that until she made her reputation as a *comédienne*, she had no business having conceptions of her own, at least she couldn't have them in my plays, and if she exhibited any more of her own original ideas I should advise the engaging of some one else to take this part. She gave in, and I anticipate no further difficulty. She is wonderfully clever at imitating, so I simply go through the part for her and tell her she must imitate me. When she comes to the regular rehearsals, I think she will astonish the stage manager a bit."

Margaret laughed, and went on. "What do you suppose Watkinson, the manager, wants me to do? Go on and take the part myself! He says I'm the best actress he ever saw, but I have assured him that my ambitions are not in that line. I shall be

satisfied at having written the play, drawing my royalties, and watching Helen Morton become the best comedy actress in New York."

She refilled Captain Jinks' saucer with milk, then handed Carolyn a magazine. "You'll like my little story in there," she said, "and you can read it while I straighten some papers.'

She turned to a great flat-topped desk and gathered some pages of type-written manuscript together, shaking them down evenly, and fastening them with a clip, her eyes wandering now and then to her friend's face.

"Of your very best, merry monarch!" said Carolyn, when she had finished Margaret's little comedy. "Light as air, bubbling like sparkling wine!'"

Carolyn continued then to turn the pages. "Here, let me read you this little story aloud!" she said. "I've read it once, but it deserves a second reading. It's the most weird, fantastic, delicate, and yet tragic thing I ever came across in print."

As Margaret listened to the reading, a strange light came into her eyes. "It seems to be rather out of the common," she remarked carelessly. "Who wrote it, did you say?"

"I didn't say," laughed Carolyn. "It is by that new writer, Frances Fennimore Farrington." Carolyn threw the magazine aside. "It's really great!" she said. "A sort of reminder of Hawthorne, with an admixture of de Maupassant, but it gives me the shivers. I'll read another one of yours as an antidote, if you have one. Any in the 'Arlington' this month?"

"Yes," said Margaret, nodding toward a table where several periodicals were piled one upon another.

"Why, here's that woman's name again, and immediately after yours!" exclaimed Carolyn. "She hasn't been long in the field, but she is certainly taking up a lot of space in it. Scarcely a periodical now but prints what people are beginning to call her 'masterpieces.' Now I'll read this one aloud too, and we'll se what we think of it."

"Yes, do," said Margaret; "but it surely ought to be a light story if it appears in the 'Arlington,' for James Lloyd has told me a dozen times that he will show nothing but the joy of life in his magazine. I've tried again and again to get him to admire some of my serious work, but he won't have it—in fact, he assures me that though I am a great *comédienne*, my serious attempts are quite below par."

Margaret laughed a bit nervously, then settled herself back in her revolving chair to listen. "As it should naturally be light and airy, let me see if Lloyd has found a new soubrette who can dance better than I," she said.

Carolyn began reading, and before she had finished a page of the story, which was entitled "The Sale," she dropped the magazine with a gesture of annoyance.

"It really doesn't start out like a comedy, does it?" said Margaret quietly, and in her quietness there seemed something of bitterness. Carolyn's eyes filled with tears of sympathy. Again she took up the book. "Shall I read it all?" she asked.

"Yes," said Margaret shortly.

The story was finished, and Carolyn was pulling on her gloves. Not a word had been spoken since Carolyn had read the words "Frances Fennimore Farrington" as she turned from the last page.

"You are thinking, Carolyn, that this woman writes as well as I, but no better than I, when she takes up the great big things of life!" burst out Margaret suddenly; "and I am thinking that too, and I am remembering that the things that bear her name are published and praised, while those which bear mine languish in the pigeon-holes of my desk," and she turned her head, and began fumbling angrily with the leaves of a rejected manuscript on her table. Then her lips touched lovingly a gold button of peculiar workmanship on her bodice, and looking up at Carolyn she said—

"These buttons are the very first output of refined gold from the Margaret Mine!"

"The Margaret Mine?" repeated Carolyn wonderingly.

"Oh, I forgot!" stammered Margaret confusedly, then "Carolyn, I should like to tell you something, if you will first promise that under no circumstances whatever will you ever reveal it except with my permission."

"It's not right to make me promise in the dark, dear."

"But this is a secret, a beautiful secret, about myself, and it is nobody's business."

"Then I promise most faithfully to keep the secret," said Carolyn.

"The Margaret Mine is one of Sam Blackmore's mines down in Peru, the Cajamarca Mining Company, you know. Look, here is a nugget I am going to have cut into poodle-dog shape, the very living, speaking image of Captain Jinks—Sam said so!"

"I suppose you think you are telling me you are going to marry Mr. Blackmore, is that it?" asked Carolyn.

"Why, yes, I was under the impression that I was conveying that idea to your mind," returned Margaret. "We have been engaged for more than a year, and we are going to be married next year, just as soon, in fact, as he gets the mines in perfect running shape. Carolyn, they're full of gold, heaps and heaps of gold! Oh, think of it, Carolyn, eight and ten ounces to the ton!"

"And do you care so much for gold, 'heaps and heaps of gold,' as you call it, Margaret?" Carolyn looked at her curiously as though she were trying to probe some sudden new mysterious characteristic of her friend.

"You must know, Carolyn, I don't care a farthing about the gold in itself, but for what it means to Sam. He and I could always make plenty of money for all the comforts and even the luxuries of life. But the gold is a vindication. It proves to the world what Sam and I knew was true. You know what they tried to do to Sam, Carolyn, you know how the District Attorney——"

Margaret broke off suddenly. Her face had on it a look that made Carolyn Blaine afraid. It was the same look which she had hidden from her lover on the night when he had told her he would release her or she must wait, and now she turned her face away from Carolyn, who, however, stretched out her hands to her in loving embrace.

"I understand so much now, Margaret, so much that has troubled me for a year past. Where I have looked for a motive and found none, now I see one and I understand!"

"Motive for what, Carolyn dear?" murmured Margaret unsteadily.

"Motive for your attacks upon the District Attorney and his office. Story upon story, article upon article of yours I have puzzled over during the past twelve months, trying to read between the lines, yet never quite succeeding. I ought to have guessed

it must all be for a woman's reason—Love!"

"Well, let us not talk of motives," said Margaret briefly. "The study of motivation always hurts my brain, even with characters in my plays and books, and to attempt to argue with you upon my own motives, their purity or their complexity, would be quite maddening. Rather let me read to you a bit of Sam's last letter, wherein he gives his unbiased, unprejudiced opinion of the works of Frances Fennimore Farrington."

Her face resumed her look of merriment as she drew forth a sheet of paper from her secretaire.

"Will you please send me the weeklies for which you are writing, and will you please cease bombarding me with such periodicals as have those melancholy effusions by Frances Fennimore Farrington in them? What anybody can see in them I'm sure I don't know, for I find in them not a single redeeming quality of style or originality. Only one word describes them, and that is '*rot.*' I thank God, Margaret, that though your own serious and greatest work is yet unpublished, and you feel unhappy about it, you could not be tempted to write down to the catchpenny level of this Farrington Fuzzle. It all goes to show that the magazines are edited by a lot of idiots, who don't know good literature from a patent medicine advertisement——"

Both girls sat back and laughed uproariously. "Well, Margaret," said Carolyn, between chuckles, "Love seems to be able to knock a man silly as well as a woman. Sam's loyalty to you is beyond dispute, though I fear his literary judgment is open to question! Here's a Shakespearean scholar and University man for you! So muddled and befuddled for love of a woman who can't get her own masterpieces published that he actually can't see a redeeming trait in the work of another woman who does get her's published. Now, do you suppose your devoted lover would not see the greatness of this story we have just been reading, 'The Sale'?"

Margaret shook her head, laughing till the tears ran down her cheeks. "He adds a postscript to his letter to say that he hopes I understand that his opinion is absolutely unbiased and unprejudiced!" she said blinkingly.

Carolyn joined again in the laughter. Then she added, "You know how I feel about your own rejected stories, dear, don't you? I have considered them so great that I have believed in all the world you could have no rival if only your editors would consent to treat you as other than a writer of comedy."

"And you think now," said Margaret, noting her hesitation, "that I have a worthy foewoman; that even if my own work were published, the honours would have every chance of being even?"

"Yes, Margaret. It would not be true friendship for me to deceive you. Some of this woman's work falls below the standard of some of yours, but much of it is fully up to the highest standard even you have set for yourself. Margaret, I would have you push forward toward the mark of your high calling! You have no bread-and-butter struggle now as some writers have. You have a good income from your plays, and will soon be married to a rich man. Margaret, do better things than this Frances Fennimore Farrington, and make the publishers take them!"

Margaret took her friend's face between her hands and looked deep into her eyes.

"Carolyn," she said, "I promise you I will!"

CHAPTER V

MISS FARRINGTON DECLINES AN INVITATION

Mrs. Herbert toiled wearily up the stairs to the door of her favourite lodger. It was a hot July day, and her honest English face was even more ruddy than was its wont. The red was redder in her cheeks, her nose glowed, her chin shone almost carmine, and her forehead was flushed.

"It's that 'ot," she murmured apologetically, when Miss Farrington opened the door in answer to her timid knock. Then, suddenly collecting herself with some confusion, she said—

"Good morning, my lady—that is to say, I mean——"

In her present state of complexion blushing were impossible to poor Mrs. Herbert, so she merely grew more confused than ever, and her kindly blue eyes took on a frightened look, for this was the first time she had so addressed her lodger in several months.

The lodger smiled somewhat deprecatingly. "Never mind, Mrs. Herbert," she said. "We'll let it pass this time, but you know I must insist that you abstain from covering me with glory and titles. And will you sit down a minute? You look quite knocked up with the heat."

"Yes, miss, thank you, miss, hexcuse me, miss," stammered the landlady as though now determined in one breath to make atonement for her slip, and sitting down, not squarely nor solidly, but on the very edge of the chair as one not accustomed to sitting comfortably in the presence of those whom she termed "her betters."

"Yes, miss, it do be that 'ot in this country, and it do seem to go to my 'ead like, but the front 'all was that full of letters and papers for you that I thought I'd better fetch 'em, though, as I know, you don't like to be disturbed this time in the morning. And would you please hexcuse me, my la—miss, for fetching them in my hapron, 'Arriet 'avin' the card tray in the kitchen polishing it hup?"

She scooped from her lap many letters and papers, most of them forwarded from different publication offices to which they had originally been addressed, and Miss Farrington, placing them on the table, asked her in a tone which certainly meant that she was exceedingly busy, if there were anything else.

"Yes, your—I mean, yes, miss!" corrected poor Mrs. Herbert. "A young woman 'as been 'ere these three days runnin' now, savin' she must see you, and me sayin' you weren't in, and she was 'ere again this mornin'. Never before would she give her name, sayin' you didn't know 'er, but she seemed discouraged like when I said again you were hout, so she left this card, and says would I try to hinfluence you to see 'er, it meanin' so much to 'er to get a hinterview with you in 'er paper before the other papers does it. I never did see the like of this young lady, or, as I should say, young *person*, for haskin' quest'ons which hare not 'er business. Was you tall, was

you young, was you married, what did you heat for breakfast, did I know what Henglish town you comed from, did you comb your 'air 'igh or low or medium, and was your heyes blue, and was you a good dresser or a dowdy, and would I let 'er sit on the 'at-rack in the 'all till you come 'ome. I hup and told 'er that Your Ladyship wouldn't be hinterviewed by hanybody, but that she had just——"

"Mrs. Herbert! You did not say that, surely? You did not speak of me as 'her ladyship,' did you?" Miss Farrington looked very much agitated, as she broke suddenly into the landlady's narrative.

Mrs. Herbert wrung her hands. "Oh, my lady—I mean miss, hexcuse me, for my 'ead did be that 'ot, I didn't know 'ow to get rid of the himpudent person that she was!"

"This is really very serious, Mrs. Herbert, and I must insist that you never make this mistake again. Have I not told you my name? And in regard to all persons, interviewers and others, who may call, continue to say that I am out, unless you have previous instructions in regard to special callers."

There was no smile on Miss Farrington's face now. The sweet look had left it. She was exceedingly stern, though with her temper well in hand.

"I am very sorry, miss, and I do 'ope you won't leave because I 'ave been that stupid?" said Mrs. Herbert tremulously.

"No. I shall not leave on account of it," said the lady, bending slightly; "and certainly in the main you have obeyed all my instructions implicitly. If this young person comes again, be careful to say that *Miss Farrington* is out, and that she begs always to be excused from appearing in the papers."

Miss Farrington bowed slightly, even smilingly, as the discomfited landlady humbly made her exit, nor could she hear that person murmur, as she went puffing down the stairs, "But nevertheless and 'owsomever, she hare a ladyship, and that I'll take my solemn hoath!"

Miss Farrington began opening her morning mail, and, as she read through one letter after another, a glad light was in her eyes. Her face was one that seemed to need animated thought to show it off to advantage. A more observant landlady than Mrs. Herbert might have noticed a certain air of self-repression and constraint about her lodger. Mrs. Herbert was not only unobservant, she was, to a certain extent, deficient in that curiosity which makes so many persons in her walk of life obnoxious. She had her own very defined notions of what was becoming to her position as landlady to a lodger whom she was convinced was of noble birth. Often in her own mind she speculated about her lodger, but she never pried nor tried to pry. Down among her pots and stew-pans now she scoured and chatted with Harriet, while up above them Miss Farrington read letter after letter, taking out sundry cheques from envelopes. Once or twice she actually pressed the cheques to her lips, as she murmured "Recognition! recognition!" Then her smile died away, and it was as though her mind wandered to another land, where dwelt something loved and dearly desired.

She noted a letter that still remained unopened, and she tore it apart. At the top of the sheet was a huge crest and a motto, and as she looked at it her face lighted up again, and she fairly shook with laughter.

"Absolutely absurd!" she exclaimed. "Could one fancy a gentlewoman having an elephant like that on her notepaper? Oh, these shoddy Americans that would be what they are not! But let us see."

"DEAR MISS FARRINGTON,—I have so enjoyed your beautiful stories that I want to meet you and have my friends do the same. Therefore I am giving a small reception in your honour at three o'clock on Thursday, July 9th, at my country home, address as above, where many of my literary and artistic friends will be present. I am sure you will not say you cannot come when I tell you that I have sent out the cards, adding, 'To meet Miss Frances Fennimore Farrington.' And will you not stay over night with us? Take the train from the Grand Central as indicated by the enclosed timetable, and you will be all right. I will meet you in my carriage at the depot.

"Yours admiringly,

"MRS. GREGORY-MILLS."

Now Miss Farrington was convulsed. "To say nothing of the remarkable signature of 'Mrs. Gregory-Mills,'" she exclaimed, "this is a most extraordinary letter!"

She sat down again, and a renewed outburst escaped her. "Really first to have sent out her cards, and then tell me not to disappoint her, as she has added my name to them as the guest of honour!" Miss Farrington grew very merry indeed, and her laugh was exceedingly sprightly. It rippled and bubbled over, became quiescent and began again. Finally she calmed herself sufficiently to lay the letter upon her open desk; then drawing forth a sheet of heavy white paper, perfectly plain, she wrote rapidly, with a smile that was like a sneer flitting across her face:—

"Miss Farrington's compliments and thanks to Mrs. Gregory-Mills, and regrets that she is compelled to decline her kind invitation for Tuesday, July 9th."

"There!" she exclaimed, folding the missive into an envelope. "I wonder will that impertinent upstart have sense enough to know that I have herewith given her a slap in the face!"

Then from around her neck she unwound a long chain which she wore hidden under her bodice, on which hung a man's ring of curious workmanship. Down into the blue wax which melted over the taper and fell to the envelope she firmly pressed the seal with which the ring was set. Suddenly she snatched the stick of wax again, and let some of it fall upon a part of the device which she had just pressed upon the envelope, and on this melted wax she used only a half of the ring's setting, producing thus a most complicated effect. "It would never do to let this person hunt up my coat-of-arms in a heraldry book!" she laughed. "I fancy she can never decipher it now."

From her desk she went into the bedroom, took from the hanging closet a smart hat of a high crown; then from a trunk, which she unlocked with a Yale key, she drew forth a long dark coat, made somewhat after the style of a motor-coat, and she also took another hat of an altogether different style from the one which she had just pinned upon her head. The coat and the hat, which was of such soft and pliable straw that it could be bent and compressed into almost any shape or size

without injuring its appearance, she now wrapped together in a neat brown paper parcel, and tied it. Over the hat which she wore she drew a motor-veil, pulled on her gloves, which were certainly unnecessarily and wastefully long for sleeves that reached quite past her wrists, and started down the stairs with her letter in her hand and the parcel under her arm.

She had walked some little distance, and was about to turn from the Square into a street that should lead to Broadway, when, looking back, she noticed a lady leading by a long round strap a large black French poodle. Suddenly the dog stopped directly in front of the house which Miss Farrington had just left, seated himself on his haunches, and was evidently refusing to stir an inch. Miss Farrington thought that the lady and the dog were indulging in a heated argument, for the lady was shaking a reproving finger in the dog's face, while the dog was holding out in the lady's face a ruffled right paw, his whole attitude being one of earnest appeal. Then from the place where she stood under the shade of a tree, amused at the spectacle, Miss Farrington saw the dog slightly change his position, plant himself more squarely on his haunches, and begin to wave his paw up and down while showing a long, waggling pink tongue, though whether in defiance or merely from panting with the heat it was impossible to say. Again the lady shook her finger menacingly, and again the dog's paw replied as menacingly, while a great orange satin bow on his head fairly bobbed from side to side in controversy.

"Dear thing! Dear old thing!" said Miss Farrington half aloud, as she hurried from the tree and went on toward Broadway. English women of the upper class are proverbially fond of dogs, and it was quite possible that this one remembered a pet of her own in the place she called "home," of which this dog reminded her. At any rate, she smiled ever so sadly, then sighed, and said again, with a suspicion of tears in her eyes and her voice, "Dear thing!"

Into a large department store on Broadway she hastily pushed her way through a swinging door. In this place there were many doors for entrance and exit, each guarded by a boy, one door even opening out upon a subway station, so it would not be any wonder if, questioned at closing time that night, not a boy could remember having seen a lady answering to Miss Farrington's description leave the store.

CHAPTER VI

AT MRS. GREGORY-MILLS' PARTY

Margaret Allison looked a most bewitching person as she leaned against a vine-covered tree in Mrs. Gregory-Mills' garden, with its lawns stretching down toward the Hudson.

Her little Irish dressmaker had outshone herself in the planning of the summery organdie frock which Margaret had hastily ordered as soon as she received an invitation to Mrs. Gregory-Mills' 'party' "to meet Miss Frances Fennimore Farrington."

"I want to look particularly nice and unintellectual," she had said to Miss O'Callahan, as she arrived there breathless one morning at the beginning of July, when Miss O'Callahan was directing the packing and storing away of her belongings preparatory to two months' holiday away from meditations on frocks and frills. The little woman had at first declared that nothing could induce her to remain in town another three days, had called down imprecations from her patron saint upon the head of her favourite customer, and had ended by going into retreat with yellow-flowered organdie and bébé velvet ribbon to match, emerging therefrom at the end of two nights and two days with a gown that filled Margaret's heart with happiness and her mouth with Miss O'Callahan's praises.

Miss O'Callahan herself had brought it home early in the afternoon of the day of Mrs. Gregory-Mills's party. She had slipped the skirt, with its shimmering yellow silk lining, over Margaret's head, shoeing off Captain Jinks the while, he having taken a sudden desire to embrace his lady and give her a proof of his affection. Miss O'Callahan had fastened the bodice, adjusted the belt with its rosettes of ribbon velvet, pinned the white and yellow hat upon Margaret's brown hair that sparkled coppery in the sun, then sped her away in a hansom-cob to the Grand Central Station, leaving Captain Jinks to the loving care of Annette.

Mr. James Lloyd, the enterprising young editor of the "Arlington Magazine," stood beside Margaret near the tree, the two having wandered away from the other guests, who were deposited in excited-looking groups about the lawn. Mr. Lloyd was pulling a flower to pieces with one hand, a flower that grew tall against the tree, while with the other hand he held Margaret's silk and lace parasol above the white and yellow hat.

"I wonder you found time to come, oh busy man," remarked Margaret, smiling. "When I asked you the other day if you would be here, you said you wouldn't, you know."

"Well, I do hate these 'functions' as a usual thing, but at the last minute I changed my mind. Then I telephoned your hotel, thinking it would be pleasant if we could come out by the same train, but they said you had gone."

"And what made you change your mind?" quizzed Margaret, mischievously. "An overwhelming desire to meet the lioness? I believe you told me the other day that she had never done you the honour to call at your office."

Young Lloyd's face showed a trace of embarrassment and impatience, and Margaret smiled again almost impudently up into his very eyes.

"Dear, dear! One might almost think that the citadel of your defiant bachelordom had at last been invaded, to note your blush, and that you have fallen a victim to the charms of your new contributor. I say 'charms,' for one must suppose her to have them to a very dangerous extent, when she can impress such a conception of her personality upon an editor who has never seen her! Now, shall I give you the benefit of my opinion of Anglo-American alliances? I happen to have known a great many Englishwomen, and I assure you that they are so different from American women that really—"

She stopped her teasing out of pity for the ever-mounting flush upon the young editor's forehead, and he immediately broke the silence with——

"I might ask you why you came, considering that I once heard you declare that you had dropped Mrs. Gregory-Mills for good and all, not being able to stand her vulgarities!"

"Oh, I am frank to say I never expected to attend another one of our pushing hostess's garden parties after the way she spilt herself all over me two years ago, and had the impertinence to introduce me to that Italian attaché as her 'very dearest friend,' when she had only met me twice in her life. But this invitation attracted me. I made up my mind to take advantage of this extraordinary opportunity to meet this Miss Frances Fennimore Farrington, who seems to have sprung up rocket-like in the literary world.

"But what puzzles me is that I haven't met Miss Farrington, and nobody else seems to have met her. I naturally expected to find her standing beside our hostess. Instead, Mrs. Gregory Hyphen Mills was being supported by her audacious-nosed daughter on the right, and her angular cousin—a perfect crime of ugliness—on the left, and here it is half-past four, and not a word of Miss Farrington have I heard, except that nobody has the courage to ask where the lady is. If you had the slightest regard for my feelings you would go and inquire, for if the lioness is not to be exhibited, I shall take myself back to town. I don't mind telling you that I made myself pretty in Miss Farrington's honour, and not for the sake of Mrs. Hyphen Mills or any of her frump following."

"You certainly have made yourself pretty!" he said, admiringly, taking a full up-and-down look at her. "But is it not somewhat inconsistent for a woman to make herself pretty for another woman?"

"I'm not troubled about consistency, thank Heaven! I pray always to be delivered from the consistent woman and the just man. They, with their yard-sticks, so many inches to the foot, so many feet to the mile—crawling along like measuring worms. Don't ever insult me by thinking for an instant that I would be consistent."

"I won't then," he laughed, "which all reminds me that though I hate to bring in shop talk at a social gathering, I must take the opportunity of asking you when it is your intention to do that little story you promised me so long ago? I have published this month the last of your scintillations I have on hand, and I beg another sparklet at your earliest convenience."

"Margaret Allison will sparkle no more for the columns of the 'Arlington'," she answered decisively, looking at him with somewhat of defiance in her face.

"I don't understand," he said. "You know how I value your delicious humour, Miss Allison. In your own line you have not your peer in this country; no, nor in any other country, that I know of!"

"My own line!" mimicked Margaret. "Pray, James Lloyd, what is 'my own line'!"

"Humour," he answered. "You know my views about your foolish attempts to work outside your field."

"That they are below par?" she said mockingly.

"Frankly, yes, since you will have it. But your humour—Great Scott!"

"James Lloyd," said Margaret solemnly, "when next you publish one of my comedies, you will first have praised and published one of my serious stories."

"What do you mean?" he asked in astonishment.

"What I have said," she replied, and stretching out her hand for her parasol, she turned away from him.

Just then a lady of spiral tendencies was seen shooting hither and thither about the lawn. She was followed by the portly form of Mrs. Gregory-Mills, in whose hands fluttered a yellow paper, and Margaret and James Lloyd joined a half-dozen persons who were sitting on rustic seats near the house.

"My dears!" gasped Mrs. Gregory-Mills, "I must tell you of my disappointment and yours. I hoped for the best until the last minute. The fact is, that this morning I received a note from Miss Farrington saying she was ill, but would try to come. In case she could not, she would telegraph. Now comes the telegram saying she is worse. Really, I do assure you that from her note I gathered that she had only a headache or something unimportant, and as there seemed every chance of her coming, and there was no chance to get word to you all, I could not put off the party."

Mrs. Gregory-Mills fluttered awkwardly over to Margaret. "Miss Allison," she said, "I may not have mentioned it in my letter to you, but one of the chief things I had in mind was a meeting between you and Miss Farrington. I said to Mr. Gregory-Mills, 'Now, those two girls ought to know each other, and I'll see if I can bring it about!"

Margaret's smile was a bit peculiar. "That was just like you, Mrs. Gregory-Mills," she said. "But perhaps another time you will be able to bring us together. I should not be surprised if Miss Farrington has been overworking herself this hot weather—so different from English Julys. She has turned out an amazingly large amount of work during the past few months. I know of no other writer who would attempt so much. But I didn't know you were acquainted with her until I got your invitation. Did you meet her in England? Do tell me what she is like?"

"Now, my dear, there you have me!" said Mrs. Gregory-Mills, growing redder than the heat warranted. "You see, we ourselves haven't met yet. Personal mutual friends, you know—I should say very dear mutual friends, indeed, wished me to make her stay in New York pleasant, and as I know most people who are worth knowing in the literary and artistic set, I made up my mind I'd do something for her."

There was just the slightest uplift of Margaret's brow. "Always kind and enterprising Mrs. Gregory-Mills" she said, with a bit of slyness in her tone, which may have escaped the embarrassed hostess, though it certainly arrested the attention of Mr. Lloyd, who had again taken her parasol, and was twirling it back and forth with a great showing of disinterestedness.

"But do you know," continued Margaret, looking about the circle, "it would appear that Miss Farrington cannot go out much, for nobody yet has spoken to me of having met her. It's rather a trial to me, too, for I am more interested in her personality than in her literary ability."

"Perhaps Miss Allison doesn't think she has any of the latter," put in a young man with a lemon-colored moustache and dreamy, grey eyes. His tone had something of a biting sneer in it, with a sarcastic turn that Margaret could not but note.

"Oh," she said lightly, "it would scarcely become me to set up my judgment against the various critics who have hailed her as a modern Hawthorne, a decent de Maupassant, and an abbreviated Balzac! What I want to know is, whether she is young or old, pretty or ugly, stylish or dowdy, light or dark. They say she's English, and her manner of expressing herself in print would seem to lend colour to that supposition.

"Is she, then, an elongated exclamation point in appearance, straight in front and back, with hair done à la English royal family style, with a very visible invisible net plastered over it? Has she got a wide mouth and long teeth, or a rose-bud showing tiny pearls, and has she got anything to say in conversation, except 'I fancy' and 'Really!' and the like? It may occur to you that I could write to her and try to make her acquaintance, but, being English and, I suppose, sufficient unto herself, she would probably 'thrun me down,' as Mr. Dooley expresses it, and so I have looked forward to this meeting on the Hudson with more interest than you can possibly imagine."

"Now, Miss Allison, I am happy to say I can set your mind at rest—or no, perhaps not that exactly! I mean that having the pleasure, and I may add, the honour, of the lady's acquaintance, not to say friendship, I am prepared to give you points upon her personal appearance."

"How delightful!" exclaimed Margaret, looking gratefully toward the young man with the lemon-coloured moustache.

"You may well say that," he said, coming over and taking a seat near her. "She is entirely delightful, and one of the most beautiful young women I have ever met. Sitting to me for her portrait, you see, so I ought to know!"

"Ah!" exclaimed Margaret, with the slightest start of surprise, but without a dimming of her brilliant smile.

"Yes," continued he, "she's tall, the divinely kind, and slim, and walks like a queen, not like her own Queen, mind you, who is lame, poor thing! and her voice is a sort of ripple. Fair mouth, glorious eyes, that you would swear are one colour one minute and another the next; and I've seen nothing like her hair in all New York, though it is possible she may wear it a little stiff, but no visible invisible nets, as you call them!"

Mr. Hillary Angell, portrait painter to the ladies, swelled out with importance as he ended his word portrayal of New York's latest literary sensation. Among his intimates he was known to have an accommodating imagination, and those who heard his description of Frances Farrington wondered how far it might be correct. Only Margaret Allison had any further question to ask.

"And how old is she, Mr. Angell?"

"Well, of course, you'll allow I couldn't ask her that, but certainly she cannot be more than twenty-five, though she doesn't look more than twenty-two."

"Dear dear!" laughed Margaret, and her laugh was only half-hearted, "the gods certainly must have endowed this woman—youth, beauty, and what people are saying is a talent approaching to genius. But she must have lived widely and largely in twenty-five years, and most sorrowfully, for her pen seems to drop tears continuously."

"Yes," broke in Hillary Angell, "and a good thing, my dear Miss Allison, that it does, for people are saying that if that woman ever went in for comedy, our leading humorous story-writer would do well to look to her laurels."

Margaret smiled at him patronizingly, then with a turn in the direction of James Lloyd, she said with a dare-devil look in her eyes—

"I, for one, shall be most delighted and interested to see her try."

CHAPTER VII

THE RIVALS SEEM ABOUT TO MEET

The month of September was made up of successes, disappointments, and surprises for Margaret Allison.

On the night of the third, her new play had been produced, and it had immediately become the season's hit. Helen Morton, hitherto almost unknown, and considered by those who did know her as but a third-rate performer in third-rate melodrama, turned out to be the most fascinating little *comédienne* imaginable, thanks to Margaret's indefatigable drilling during July and August, for Margaret had remained in town throughout the whole summer.

Always when the young actress had ventured upon "I think, Miss Allison," or "It does seem to me, Miss Allison, that just here I should do thus and so," Margaret had clipped her would-be soaring wings with—

"But you are not to 'think' on this point, and things are not to 'seem' to you. Simply watch me and imitate me, every movement of my hand or foot, every twist and turn of my head, every variation in my voice. You see I not only conceived this part and actually lived it all the time I was writing the play, but I'm a pretty good actress myself. Now, watch and listen!"

Then she would go through a part of a scene, the eyes of Miss Morton following her with close attention, yet with a look of something very akin to resentment in them. Finally the young woman came to understand that for her to "think" or to have things "seem" in any manner different from the conception of Miss Allison was an utterly useless exertion on her part, and she became true to the slightest inflection of the voice and the tiniest gesture of her teacher.

Just how the miracle of her success as a comedy actress had been brought about was not suspected, for Helen Morton had said nothing explanatory to any of her friends, and with the exception of Carolyn Blaine, Margaret had revealed the secret to no one. So, as the nights went on and lengthened into weeks, Margaret drew in her royalties, and Helen Morton became the toast of the town.

While Margaret rejoiced in the success of her play, which she had decided was to be the last stage comedy she would ever write, a new senstation was sprung upon New York. It was a novel, the first book by Frances Fennimore Farrington, who had now become what appeared to be a brilliant fixed star in the literary firmament.

For more than a month before its publication it had been announced daily in large type by her publishers as a book of the most wonderful power and pathos that the house of Benson and Company had ever offered to the American public. They exploited its author as a young hitherto unknown genius whom they had "discovered," and two weeks before the date set for publication, the first large edition had been sold, and the printing presses were at work on another.

Events proved that the book had not been overpraised in the advance advertisements. It fulfilled the most sanguine expectations of the critics and the public, who displayed the liveliest interest in the personality of the author, which, however, she did not seem to be disposed to gratify. She was said to have declined very firmly but most courteously all invitations to appear in public, so that while she was the heroine of the metropolis, and thousands of readers were poring over her book throughout the United States, few could say that they knew her or had ever even seen her. Messrs. Benson and Company earnestly requested her to grant interviews to certain reporters, and they desired her to furnish them with photographs for reproduction, and she declined in a courteously worded note to the head of the firm, declaring that while her book belonged to the public, her personality belonged to herself.

Her attitude of exclusiveness was thought to be most coldly English, and her aloofness, added to the gossip which emanated from a woman reporter who had called many times to see her and failed, gave rise to the rumour that she was a distinguished English lady of title.

Margaret Allison seemed to follow every turn and advance in the career of this woman, whom she was said to regard as a dangerous rival, with a keen and almost feverish interest. Much of her own serious work, which she knew to be of great merit, constantly found its way back to her from the editors and publishers to whom she submitted it, and at about this time she had her first really ambitious novel rejected by a dozen publishing houses, among them Benson and Company, who had brought out the novel by Frances Fennimore Farrington. To be sure, they had added to their letter of declination a rider by way of consoler, "We shall, however, as you must know, be much pleased to consider a novel by you of light or humorous vein, if you have anything on hand that you would care to submit to us."

There was still another sensation in literary circles, which also was furnished by Frances Fennimore Farrington. The October number of the "Arlington Magazine" presented her in an altogether new light to ts readers—that of a *comédienne*. Light, airy, deliciously snappy and funny, the story showed that here was a writer who could touch with her pen all sides of life, the shallow places as well as the deep ones. Then several other magazines and weekly papers vied with each other in exhibiting her versatility. Now she soared among the black clouds; now she turned their silver linings out to view. Death! Surely this woman had been close to death; but life, too—joyous, rollicking life must have flown through her veins; and love she knew, all unbounding, all-trusting, all-giving love. People who read her love stories said, "This woman has passed through the gates of the Celestial City, all-triumphant, crowned with glory by her beloved!" Hate also she knew. Who could doubt that the author of "The Hanging Sword" had gone down into and come up out of Great Tribulation, had known the desire for vengeance, the temptation, perhaps the yielding, to sin? Men she knew, and women, and little children, while no living creeping things among the humblest creatures of God seemed to have escaped her notice, her understanding, her kindly love and sympathy.

Many of the Sunday and evening newspapers began publishing the little humorous sketches which she was doubtless encouraged to send out plenteously after having received in July a written urgent invitation from James Lloyd, editor of the "Arlington Magazine," to try her hand at a bit of comedy for his October issue, while it was announced later that the "Arlington" would very shortly begin the publication of a sparkling serial by Frances Fennimore Farrington.

There were certain magazines that were known among literary folk as "Margaret Allison's strongholds." Four of these were invaded by the new writer, and the editor of one of them sent back to Margaret one of the best light stories she had ever written. with a common rejection slip.

This slip Margaret kept to show to Carolyn as a curiosity. "I declare to you, Carolyn," she said, handing it to her friend, with a half-amused, half-sarcastic smile, "this is certainly enough to raise the ire of one who had thought she had established herself, at least in light comedy. Why, not since the days 'when we were twenty-one' has an editor sent me a rejection slip! Now, I haven't a nasty disposition, as you know, but when I see a comedy of Frances Fennimore Farrington's appearing in the magazine that has returned one of mine with a rejection slip, I begin to feel a sort of personal antipathy to the very name of the author of the so-called 'most successful book of a decade.' "

"Margaret, that is not at all like you!" replied her friend.

"I admit it's not like me. It's not like a worm to turn, though sometimes it does."

"Margaret, you can't pass as the humble worm, to save your life!" laughed Carolyn. "Sitting there before your utterly useless but expensive grate fire, in one of Miss O'Callahan's precious hundred-dollar housegowns; thrusting out your wickedly costly slippers within a fraction of an inch of burning them to a crisp; surrounded by every luxury the mind of woman could dream; the author of the most paying comedy that has been on the boards in ten years; a nice fat bank account, despite your absurd extravagances and philanthropies to the unappreciative criminal poor—really, my child, I'm afraid I cannot view you in the light of a worm that had been trodden upon."

Carolyn's eyes twinkled as she helped herself to a box of Brummell's Best, thereby drawing the attention of Captain Jinks to the fact that he was ravenously hungry for a chocolate cream.

"But, Carolyn, this is like poaching. Not content with the reputation she was making

as a high tragedienne, it seems she must needs take up the comic side of things, and show a mean ambition to shine as the maker of smiles, the banisher of tears."

"My dear Margaret, it's the talk of everybody who was at Mrs. Gregory-Mills' party last summer that you actually dared Lloyd of the 'Arlington' to invite her to contribute some light stories! He has told it about town that you said you were through writing comedy, anyway."

"I never told him that. I said he would have to first publish my serious work before he got any more light stories."

"Well, he thinks you can't do anything but light things, so I suppose he took it as meaning that you refused ever to write for his magazine again."

"Oh, well, I don't care a snap about Lloyd or the 'Arlington,' but I promise you this, Carolyn, that sooner or later these magazines, Lloyd's included, will publish every particle of what I regard as my best work!"

"I believe that, Margaret; indeed, I know it!"

"And furthermore, one of these days I'll make a bold attempt to sweep Frances Fennimore Farrington from the literary earth!" added Margaret, bringing her hand down upon her desk with sudden decision.

"I believe that too, Margaret, and also that you will succeed," returned Carolyn.

When Carolyn had gone, Margaret spent a few minutes in pacing the floor. It was as though she had been curbing her excitement in her friend's presence, an excitement to which she must now give vent. Back and forth she strode, Captain Jinks at her heels. Long ago when she first began her dramatic work she had found it very helpful in composing speeches for her different characters to speak aloud and talk with herself as she worked, and she had discovered that talking to herself relieved a certain nervous tension even when she but gave expression to her thoughts without reference to writing. So now she burst out at first in murmurs, then in a well-pitched voice.

"To think of it!" she said. Her voice trembled as she went on. "A year and a half, so short a time since her first appearance, and look at her now! Oh, your Ladyship!" and she clenched her hands together as though to squeeze the very life out of the person she named by the title. Suddenly she snatched her hat and coat, arrayed herself for the street, and motioning Captain Jinks to accompany her, she opened the door of her apartment out into the hall, and passed Helen Morton on the threshold.

"Oh, are you going out, Miss Allison?" said the actress.

"Yes!" answered Margaret shortly. "And I cannot stop!"

"I started to come in a few minutes ago," went on Miss Morton, "but I thought you had a visitor, as I heard you talking to some one, so I went away, and was just returning. Who had the honour of drinking tea with you this afternoon, Miss Blaine?"

"Why should you be interested to know the names of my visitors? Did you happen to see Miss Blaine or anybody else go in or come out?" Margaret looked at her suspiciously.

"Why, no," answered the actress.

"Very well, then, let me bid you good afternoon," and Margaret left the elevator, called a hansom, and, whisking into it after Captain Jinks, drove hurriedly away, first telling the driver to go to Twenty-Third Street, and afterwards countermanding the order when Miss Morton was out of sight. Half an hour later, with Captain Jinks at her side, she stood on the steps of Mrs. Herbert's house in Washington Square. A certain determination shone in her eyes as she put out her hand to ring the bell, and then she hesitated. A small boy passed her. She bought a paper from him, waving him away as he offered her the change of a quarter. Then she spoke to the dog, descended the steps, and walked away without ringing, stealthily, as though she feared she might have been seen by some one within the house.

It was evident that she had started out with a decided purpose to accomplish some important act, but whatever it was, she did not do it. Back again in her luxurious rooms, she sat down and read and re-read her latest letter from her lover, the letter in which he told her of a sudden necessity for him to return for a hurried visit to New York at once.

"Sweetheart!" she murmured, pressing the last page of the letter to her lips, the page which ended with the sweet refrain of a love-song of that land where he dug for gold.

"Adios, Carissima—hasta manana!"

CHAPTER VIII

"WHAT'S IN A NAME!"

The second winter of Frances Fennimore Farrington's stay in New York was now beginning with its early snows and half-biting winds. Light stories signed by her name were now continuously appearing, and she seemed almost to have dropped the particular kind of work with which she had begun her literary career in New York and which had gained for her what looked like a lasting fame. Her book, "The Workers," had become the "best seller" of the year, and while editors and the public looked forward to the production of many books of the same style, she seemed to have settled down, first to dramatize it and then to do light stories, as though she had forever retired from the world of tragedy, except such tragedy as she found in humour.

Whereas two years before Margaret Allison's short stories and novelettes had been so sought after that she had found it impossible to supply the full demand for them, the place which that brilliant author had made for herself seemed now to have been taken and more than filled by the Englishwoman whose name in the literary world was not yet two years old. Hints began to be circulated, in the particular set to which Miss Allison belonged, about the jealousy which that young woman felt of the rapid rise of her English rival. It was known that when the book, "The Workers,'" had first appeared, the editor of a review for which Margaret had done occasional literary criticism sent a copy to her asking that she would give it a two-column article of review, and that the book was returned to the editor by Miss Allison with a note saying that she was not sure she was competent to give it an unprejudiced criticism and would therefore prefer the

work to be done by someone else. Also it was noticed that in company Miss Allison replied only with the briefest remarks when asked concerning her opinion of Miss Farrington's stories, many of her acquaintances declaring that always at such times there was a questioning, sarcastic lift of her brow.

Few stories of a fictional kind bearing Margaret's name were now seen in print. It was said that they were not particularly wanted by the various editors, since Miss Farrington had demonstrated her ability to scintillate far more brightly than Miss Allison had ever done. Then, too, it was shown that the reading public craved the new and the mysterious, and there was certainly the element of newness and mystery about the Englishwoman. She had surrounded herself with barriers against all inquirers after details of her private personality. Never an interviewer had got beyond the front door of Mrs. Herbert's house, and according to that faithful keeper, the lady was always and forever "hout." There were rumours that she was a person of great distinction, that she was the offspring of a morganatic marriage, that she was only half English, while the other half of her was right down royal. Hillary Angell, who now referred frequently to the portrait he was painting of her—on the understanding, he said, that it should not be seen by any American but himself, declared that he knew for a fact that her mother was an Austrian princess and her father an English nobleman.

Many of these stories came to Margaret through the medium of Carolyn Blaine, who, because of her friendship with Margaret, had much the same circle of acquaintances. In Carolyn's presence, Mrs. Henry Jackson, a publisher's wife, had referred to Margaret's "foreign rival" and then, turning to Carolyn, had asked tauntingly how her friend felt to be engaged in a case of Greek meeting Greek, and begged to know when the tug-of-war was coming off.

"You might tell her, Carolyn," said Margaret, when this was repeated to her, "that it's now on!"

It was during this conversation between Margaret and Carolyn that the latter picked up a magazine, and, rocking back and forth, seemed to be trying hard to read and understand something it contained. Two or three times she threw the book down, then took it again, and perused a half page or more with curiously knitted brows. She seemed to be struggling to get on to the finish and then she dropped the magazine in her lap with a gasp.

"Why, what's the matter?" asked Margaret.

"It's one of Frances Farrington's so-called 'comedies,' but it's the most direful drivel I ever read!" replied Carolyn.

"You're prejudiced, just as poor dear Sam is," said Margaret, laughing lightly. "I do not forget that you are my good admiring friend, and regard this woman as my rival."

"Prejudiced! Read it yourself, and tell me if you supposed that the veriest tenth-rate periodical would publish such rubbish. Or, here, I'll read it to you."

Margaret listened with tightened lips. "It is pretty bad!" she said, with a queer smile. "But then I'm supposed to be prejudiced too!"

"Well," said Carolyn, "here are three more of her stories in the new weeklies. Let's read those, and see who's daft, she or we!"

Together they turned the pages of three high-class weekly papers, two of which were noted for their literary exclusiveness, advertising always that they cared not for the name of a writer but for his excellence as a literary artist.

"Margaret," exclaimed Carolyn, "this woman was born an idiot, or she's gone suddenly crazy, and so have all these editors!"

Thereafter it certainly did not take prejudice or jealousy to discover the rapid decline in the quality of Frances Fennimore Farrington's work. Carolyn Blaine, though not herself a writer, was a critic of rare ability and quickness of literary insight, and, much as she loved Margaret, she could not have been blinded to any faults of literary construction or conception of plot. She was, as Margaret sometimes told her, "painfully honest" in her criticisms of all the great work of the present time and of times gone past. She would have appreciated the greatness of Margaret Allison's work if Margaret had been her worst enemy instead of her dearest friend. She had seen the wonders of Frances Fennimore Farrington's earlier stories even while she felt an unforgiving resentment against her for apparently interfering with Margaret's progress.

"Margaret dear," she said one day, "this woman has got to the end of her line, which was a short one. Once, you may remember, I called her a comet. I will now re-name her a rocket. She went up like one and has come down like one. We have all heard of the people who are men or women of one book or one picture. They suddenly startle the world with something that passes for genius, and then they sink into obscurity and are never heard of again. That will be the way of Frances Fennimore Farrington. She has written herself out."

"You forget her book, which it is said she has already dramatized, and which is so soon to appear on the stage. And you agreed with the critics that 'The Workers' is a great book!"

"No, I haven't forgotten it," returned Carolyn. "I shouldn't wonder if the play would be a success. Haven't I said she was a woman of one book? 'The Workers' is the book!"

Carolyn Blaine was not the only one who noted the decline of Frances Fennimore Farrington's literary powers, but, strange to say, those who noted it, or confessed they noted it, were not among the editors and professional critic. Story after story, which could scarcely have done credit to the veriest beginner, appeared over her signature, and still editors demanded more from her pen, still they announced in editorial paragraphs that on such and such a page would be found one of her "sparkling comedies" or her "heart-touching bits of pathos."

As for Margaret Allison, she seemed now to be devoting most of her time to writing for various weekly and daily papers such bits of things as she picked up in her daily visits to the police courts and the various trial proceedings in the Supreme Court and that of General Sessions. She might often have been seen flitting about in the vicinity of the District Attorney's of-

fices. She often lunched at Pontin's and other down-town restaurants where lawyers and judges and court officials gathered for their hasty midday meals and gossiped over various court-room and grand-jury happenings.

Many of the articles she wrote were signed by her name, although certain things she offered as news items appeared as reportorial work. She was known about Newspaper Row as a great opponent of the present American system of prosecuting, and most especially as an enemy of circumstantial evidence, so editors did not wonder that this successful writer of magazine stories, books, and plays took time to write for them ordinary newspaper material, and they gladly accepted it, most especially as it always contained the element of humor for which she was so celebrated.

Particularly did her articles reveal the most secret workings of the District Attorney's office; every mistake he made was held up to ridicule, every failure to indict was held up against him as evidence of his misplaced zeal. All that he did which he ought not to have done was placed in simple, humorous detail before the reading public, whilst its attention was called often to the many things that he left undone, and by which, being undone, the public suffered.

And the more articles of this sort appeared, the more the District Attorney's office "got busy," frantically busy, till sensational indictments began to be of almost daily occurrence. At any hour of the day public men were liable to be called before the Grand Jury to give an account of their most innocent doings and show just cause why they should not be indicted, convicted, and imprisoned for misappropriation of insurance funds, bank funds, the people's funds, put in their keeping. Failure after failure for insufficient evidence ensued, although many a trial came off which made the New York law courts the laughing stock of the country and of the world.

How the newspapers got hold of so many official secrets was the problem which neither the District Attorney nor his smart young assistants could solve. They saw, of course, the signed articles of Margaret Allison, but she could so change her style that they could not detect it in the unsigned ones that told of strange happenings in jury rooms, of juries "fixed" to a nicety, of verdicts arrived at by means of curious processes of reasoning.

The Tombs was overcrowded with prisoners of all classes awaiting trial, and the calendars were so full that judges despaired of ever getting through them, and now came an article, fully signed by the writer, upon "The Comedy of the Law's Delays," with the true state of things just sufficiently and humourously enough exaggerated as to send it home to the people and set them thinking. Then another article followed, or rather a story, written in fictional style, in which rotten fire-hose and lead-weighted life-preservers figured most ominously, it being pointed out that the manufacturers of these articles had never been indicted for murder, the story ending with a great interrogation point.

Against all this work which Margaret was doing, apparently working almost day and night to accomplish the volume of it, denying herself to visitors, much of the time never in her rooms, or, if there, then with doors locked and guarded against intrusion —against this work of her friend Carolyn Blaine one day uttered a protest.

"Margaret, I don't like it!" she said. "You are making enemies, powerful enemies. You are holding up the District Attorney to ridicule, you are antagonizing every member of his staff. There is nothing men dislike so much as to be ridiculed, especially if they have made themselves ridiculous. Stop it!"

"Well," answered Margaret quietly, "I'm just about ready to stop it, because, for the time, at least, I have finished. I've done a part of my work; now let the voters do theirs when their time comes! But mark you this, Carolyn, I have not done one solitary underhand thing to get my news, and I have been absolutely fair and square in making my attacks. I have not stooped down to pry, but I have risen high to look down upon the dealings of the Temple of Injustice, where the painting of that calm, placid Lady of the Scales hangs above the bench, though I have not attacked the judges, but the machinery that brings the so-called criminals before them. Ah, God, that the Lady of the Scales might henceforth look more carefully to her weighing!"

"Margaret, I do feel that you, in your enthusiasm, see more wrong than actually exists. There are many guilty persons indicted, tried, and sentenced, and what do you do but spend half your income in going bail for rascally men and women who then jump the bail and leave you to pay up! You get situations for the discharged convicts or those on parole, and give them opportunities to rob people again!"

"Yes, Carolyn, I do all this, and please God I shall continue to help my brothers and sisters, for I tell you I recognize them as such. Most especially now do I feel myself akin to all sinning humanity, and I say to you frankly that I know many of the sins I have not committed have been uncommitted because I have not been tempted. Oh, the fools that stand up in the synagogues and thank God that they are not as other men and other women, when they have had all their lives but the one thing lacking—opportunity, temptation!"

"You speak strangely, Margaret, but one thing I know, that you are blessed, and that finally you shall inherit the earth, for truly you are meek!"

The next afternoon after this conversation Carolyn was strolling leisurely along from a shopping expedition with the intention of walking to her up-town flat. It was Saturday, and she was free from school duties, and as Margaret had told her she would be too busy to see her all day, Carolyn walked wherever her mood seemed to lead her. Turning from Broadway into a west side street, she then turned again and went a few blocks south instead of north as she had intended doing, and then decided to go farther on to the fountain in Washington Square Park, where she thought she recognized someone she knew. This she found was a mistake, but being already a little tired she sat down on one of the benches which the bright sun had dried of the preceding day's rain and slush. Over on the pavement across from her she was suddenly attracted by the graceful, though

somewhat striding, walk of a tall woman wearing a quiet but smart-looking gown of black and white striped broadcloth with jacket to match. There was a foreign air about the hat which she wore, a rather high turban-shaped affair, over which was drawn a chiffon veil that fell over her face, which so could not be seen with any distinctness from Carolyn's bench. The woman carried herself very straight, almost unbendingly, and Carolyn found herself wondering vaguely if she could ever stoop down should she try. She held her head haughtily, almost defiantly, as though some one had disputed her right to existence, and she was asserting it.

"English as sure as you're born," thought Carolyn. "I could tell the type a mile off—her hat, her gown, her walk, the carriage of her head, English of the most uncompromising type!"

The woman stopped before an old-fashioned looking house of red brick with green shutters, walked up the white marble steps, and let herself into the great white door with a latch-key. After the woman had disappeared behind the closed door Carolyn kept her eyes still fastened upon it—just why, she did not explain to herself, and how long, she did not know, and before she removed her eyes she saw the door open again. Then Carolyn stared, for she saw Margaret Allison close the door softly behind her, trip down the steps in her jaunty way, walk rapidly, as was her wont, along the pavement, then turn and disappear from view. She noticed that Margaret was wearing her newest Russian blouse costume of blue that was so becoming to her, a large fur hat with trimmings of soft blue ribbons, that she wore no veil, that her face was flushed, and that she was looking her prettiest. She would have called after her, but she remembered that she was in a public park surrounded by people, and she did not wish to attract attention to herself or to Margaret. She wondered mildly whom Margaret knew in Washington Square, for she could not remember any common friends or acquaintances they both had in the neighbourhood.

She got up from the bench and walked still farther west, took a surface car to help her on the way, deciding that, after all, she was not completely fit for walking, and thought little more about the woman she had seen enter the house, immediately followed by Margaret coming out of it, till, a few days later, she happened to remember it when calling on Margaret at her hotel.

"Margaret, do you know anybody living in Washington Square?" she asked.

Margaret was sitting at her desk, counting a roll of money, crisp, new, green bills, which she said she was getting ready to bank.

"Twenty, forty, sixty, eighty, one hundred," she was saying. "That's nine hundred. Dear me, I must paddle along to the bank before it's closed. I don't like so much money lying about overnight." Then she answered hurriedly, "Oh, excuse me, Carolyn! Yes, dear, I do!" And she flew into her bedroom and grabbed her hat and coat.

Something in her manner showed Carolyn that Margaret did not expect the inquiry to be pressed further, and there was a quality in Carolyn's loyalty to her friend that would have made it seem to her the grossest treachery even to look in a city directory to find out who lived in the house where she had seen Margaret come out of the door. If Margaret did not want her to know, she certainly did not want to know.

It was the same about the rolls of money she had seen Margaret counting at different times during the past year, and which she knew she deposited in the bank. She knew that Margaret, like most other writers, was usually paid for her work by cheque, yet now she seemed always to be depositing not cheques but bills.

And Margaret made no explanation and Carolyn asked none.

CHAPTER IX
THE CONSPIRATORS

The average Englishwoman has the reputation of being a "bad dresser." Most particularly have the French and the Americans the habit of so referring to her. Then, immediately, if one raises quizzical eyebrows, as though in doubt of the description as applicable to all Englishwomen, your critic of frocks and styles will hastily add—

"That is to say, the untravelled Englishwoman, the middle-class, domesticated, stay-at-home Englishwoman! Ah, certainly, one does not criticize the dress, or the manner of wearing it, of the upper-class Englishwoman, she who lives in London during the Season, at her country place during the sultriest weather, and flits about hither and thither over the Continent at other times of the year. And, of course, in the evening—well, she is at her best in evening toilette!"

Now, Mrs. Herbert's lodger was certainly not untravelled, she was not "middle-class" in any sense of the word. One could not be absolutely sure that she was not "domesticated," but the chances seemed altogether against her being of that order, while most assuredly she was not of the "stay-at-home" sort, else she would never at that moment have been standing under a softly shaded gas jet in the sitting-room of Mrs. Herbert's first-floor suite in Washington Square.

It need not be argued that it consequently followed that she was a "good dresser." Let the fact merely be stated that she was, as she stood there, a magnificent-looking woman, whose right to move in the very highest circles no one for an instant would think of disputing; that she was beautifully and becomingly dressed, and most appropriately, for it was evening, the hour about eight, and she was expecting a visitor.

Her gown was of soft light blue *crêpe,* draped over heavy taffeta silk of the same shade, and it clung gracefully to her lithe figure, its skirts sweeping the floor with the gentlest frou-frou imaginable. Her arms were bare, so was her neck, although in latest fashion, there depended from the straps that fastened the bodice over the shoulders long scarfs of what looked like priceless lace, such as one finds among the heirlooms of the aristocracy of the Old World. Around her neck she wore no ornament of any kind, not even the tiniest necklet. It was as though she knew the beauty of her throat too well to spoil it with a bauble. Her hair was dressed a bit more carefully, perhaps, than usual, but high, as always, while a somewhat curious upright ornament of gold added to the statuesque effect.

When she heard the downstairs bell ring

she ran quickly to her bedroom, turned on the lights surrounding the mirror there, seemed satisfied with what she saw, and walked back to her sitting-room just in time to be standing correctly and confidently over a chair-back, ready to answer Mrs. Herbert's timid knock.

"The gentleman, miss!" said Mrs. Herbert, hastily turning and going down the stairs, and Miss Farrington held out her hand to the man who entered, quickly shutting the door behind him, as though fearing that even his greeting might be heard.

"Good evening, Duchess!" he said, and over the woman's hand he bowed very low.

"Can you not look me full in the face and say that?" she inquired, with something of amusement and tremulousness in her voice.

"I can, most assuredly!" he said, and now his eyes smiled into hers. "You must know that I, of all men, will never dispute your right to the title!"

"You gave a name at the door?" she said inquiringly, as she motioned him to a chair next the one she took herself.

"Why, certainly! I said to the person who opened the door, 'The name is Saint John,' pronouncing it, of course, in proper English style, 'Sinjun'!"

His hostess put her hand to her side, and laughed almost immoderately. He joined, in a quiet, subdued, grim sort of way. Suddenly he seemed to take note of her hands, all ringless.

"Where is your ring?" he asked.

"It is never away from me," she answered with a note of pride and tenderness in her voice. "Usually I wear it about my neck on a chain. To-night I wear it as an armlet," and she held up her wrist, showing it encircled with a chain from which hung the ring with which she had sealed the letter written to Mrs. Gregory-Mills.

The man sat back in his chair more comfortably. He was approaching, but had not reached, middle age. His hair being very light, as was his moustache, there might have been a sprinkling of grey in it without its being noticeable. He had blue eyes that smiled half-sweetly, half-sadly, yet always humorously. At times one might have called his face battle-scarred, so plainly did it tell of struggles, some won, some lost. He was tall and thin, and to look at him one would know that he was surely Anglo-Saxon, though whether Scotch English, or American, with descent from the two former, it would be impossible to say. He wore evening clothes, and his manner of wearing them showed that he was perfectly at home in the after-sunset garb of the man of the world. For a time he sat gazing at his hostess. His glance was one of keen admiration, not unmixed with tenderness.

"I don't know that I have ever seen you looking so well," he said finally. "Your strenuous work of late has not had a bad effect upon you, and you have grown younger, not older!"

"It is good of you to say that," she replied gratefully; then changing the subject.—

"To refer to your letter which I received this morning; I want to know when is the exact time you will leave this country?"

"The latter part of next week, most certainly. You must not count on a day after that. How are your affairs? Can you arrange them perfectly by that time?"

"Yes—that is to say, I must arrange them, so it seems, to suit your convenience in the matter," and she laughed lightly.

"And just how can you arrange things so quickly?" he asked. "You spoke of England in your letter."

"Yes," she replied. "Why not England."

"Certainly England, if you think best," he said.

"Then I do think best."

"What ship?"

"The 'Majestic,'" she replied.

He looked at her questioningly, and as if knowing his thoughts, she said, "I have never been on it. I crossed by the American Line."

"What about the cheques?" he asked.

"There can be only one more, and it will be here the first of the week, so I can give it to you before you leave."

"For what amount?"

"Ninety pounds—that is, I mean to say four hundred and fifty dollars. It is difficult for me to forget pounds and talk in dollars!" and she laughed merrily

"I can manage that, then, but for Heaven's sake don't take me unawares with any others!"

"I think I have calculated to a nicety, but if there should be any others, I could throw them away!"

"I believe you are capable of it, you feel so rich!"

"Yes, I do certainly feel rich. Why shouldn't I? Do you know how much money I have made during the past two years? Of course you do, though!"

"What have you done with it?" he asked.

"That I will not tell you. I might say I cannot tell you, to be more polite."

"You need not. I have my suspicions, however. But the next thing to discuss, is what's to be done about Him."

"That's right," she whispered. "Let's agree not to bring in his name this evening. I believe my landlady and her daughter are absolutely honourable and above eaves-dropping, but to be safe, let us pretend that the walls have ears!"

"Then to repeat, I ask what is to be done about Him."

"I shall have to tell Him the truth."

"An absolutely full confession, from beginning to end, keeping back nothing?" he asked tauntingly.

"Yes," she nodded, smiling.

"And how do you think He'll take it?"

"Now, how can I tell that, since I never had confessions, at least of this sort, to make to Him before?" she asked carelessly.

"You certainly don't think He's a man to be dealt with lightly, a man to be trifled with? You ought to know him enough to understand that when he puts his foot down—and He's got a big foot—something's bound to happen."

"Yes," she said;" "He's got a big foot, but he has also something else."

"What do you mean? To what particular attribute do you refer?"

"A sense of humour," she replied. "I look to that to deliver me from the wrath to come."

"Sometimes that fails a man in great emergencies. Let a thing touch him to the quick—I say I'm not absolutely sure you can depend on his sense of humour."

"Well, I do depend on it, at least that and something else. I need not mention the other thing, I suppose?"

"No," he answered softly, "you need not mention it! After all, I doubt not you're safe."

They sat now silently. Then he spoke of indifferent things, such as the outlook from her windows, the people with whom she lodged. She interrupted him suddenly.

"I had almost forgotten to tell you that Miss Margaret Allison has already been to this house several times."

He jumped from his chair. "What! herself?" he exclaimed.

She laughed. "Yes, her very own self, in her very own proper person. She was 'becomingly gowned,' as the society reporters would put it, in a blue broadcloth Russian blouse suit and fur hat, which suited her to perfection, and on one occasion the brunette complexion of her French poodle was set off with an orange ribbon. She happened to be giving him an airing, so they both dropped in. He was beautifully behaved. He trotted as discreetly and as silently up the stairs and in and out of the door as though he were back in the pickpocket business."

"I should say you have been most indiscreet, if you ask me!" he remarked.

"But you see, I didn't ask you!" and she laughed tantalizingly.

"Might I ask how Miss Allison contrived to amuse herself while calling here?" he asked.

"Yes, though I hardly think I can repeat her whole conversation. She talked almost incessantly in her quaintest American fashion and with her strongest American accent, and once in a while I answered her in my choicest English."

They both laughed. It was nearly ten o'clock. He rose to go, drew on his overcoat, and extended his hand.

"I will go down to the door with you," she said; then added, "Something else I almost forgot to mention. The last time Miss Allison was here she walked directly into Hillary Angell, as she turned away from the house."

"You mean the artist who is painting the invisible portrait?"

"The very same!" she replied.

"Do you consider it wise to have allowed such a thing as that to happen?"

"It was not a question of my allowing it. I did not arrange it. It simply happened. One of those coincidences that nobody can prepare for. I should call it most unfortunate, but it cannot be helped. Of course, Mrs. Herbert would have told him I was out when he rang the bell, in any event."

They were now at the outer door. "The 'Majestic,'" then you say?" He turned the knob and paused.

"Most certainly the 'Majestic!' Of course, you understand that——"

"I understand perfectly," he interrupted, as though fearing that someone might be listening, and then with a good night, he descended the steps and hurried away.

Upstairs in her room, his hostess of the evening smiled, then brushed away a tear as she prepared for bed. At midnight she was still awake, with head buried among her pillows, as though in fear that any sound she might make would be heard by the occupant of the next room.

CHAPTER X.

"GOLD, GOLD, GOLD!"

In the bow window of Margaret's drawing-room at the "Illington" stood Samuel Blackmore, his boyish face ruddy, smiling, his eyes alight with the joy of re-union.

His stop in New York for the present was to be but two weeks. He had returned to give some personal attention to the New York end of the Cajamarea Mining Company, and to escort to Peru three of the directors, who were going down to look over the operations, inspect the machinery and the men engaged in extracting gold from the earth, and to see with their own eyes such rich ore as they had not dreamed of.

For now the Cajamarea Mines were the most talked-about mines in all South America, the company was the most go-ahead and successful mining company in New York, large dividends were being declared to the stockholders, and leading members of the company had become men of wealth, and Sam Blackmore himself was a millionaire.

While Sam looked about him, smilingly, lovingly, Margaret sat upon the floor in the midst of the trophies he had brought her. The rooms were a little of vicuña furs, softer than down, more beautiful than any furs she had ever before seen; there were Peruvian *huacos*, which for centuries had lain in the earth of the Andes and surrounding country, companions of the Inca dead. The *huacos* were of pottery ware of curious construction, old necklaces and ornaments of gold and silver, armlets which had been buried on the wrists of maidens and matrons who had lived and died in the golden age of the Incas. There were great jars crudely embossed by the Peruvian workers, ere Pizarro conquered and robbed them, rewarding them with this particular brand of Christianity. Into these jars Margaret poured water, and made them glorious in the pink bloom of wonderful roses and carnations which her lover had ordered to be sent in to her regardless of cost.

At times, in the midst of her pretty task, she would stop and wrap herself about with vicuña skins, till she looked like a bright-eyed Esquimaux, peeping out mischievously and crying:

"Oh, Sam, success is so glorious, happiness is so glorious, wealth is so glorious, when thus it comes, and you are so altogether glorious!"

Then his arms would fold her up, his hands pushing back the fur robes from her hair, while he buried his face among its locks.

It was their delight to load down Captain Jinks with gems and then listen to them rattle as he bounded in and out from room to room, the old Inca chains wound about his black neck by way of collar, his ruffled paws encased in antique chased gold bracelets.

There were rich laces from the old Peruvian convents, hand-work of Spanish nuns two centuries dead, who had gone blind over the making of the fine drawnwork of these wondrous altar cloths, baptismal towels, and priestly robes. There were mantas, too, of the richest black silk *crêpe*, still the national out-door garment of the Peruvian women.

Margaret disengaged herself from her

furs and her lover's arms to drape herself in one of these heavily embroidered garments, which were simply large pieces of the *crêpe* several yards square. She stood before the great pier-glass of one of her doors, winding the silky thing about her neck and shoulders, letting it fall gracefully to the hem of her skirt. Now she looked nun-like, with face and figure unrelieved by a touch of white. She had never been in Peru, had never seen a woman so dressed, yet when Sam looked at her he exclaimed--

"A Peruvian, I swear it! How did you know how to do it?"

"You described how the women wore it, you know," she replied, smiling coquettishly. "So I have draped it properly?"

"Si, Señorita bonita, ah!" he cried dellghtedly.

"Si, Señor!" she answered with a perfect Castilian accent and the pretty little gesture peculiar to Spanish women when they are pleased with a compliment. "Muchas gracias!"

Then snatching one of the banjos he had brought her, she threw back her head and began to pick the opening bars of "La Paloma," her white fingers thrusting themselves in and out among the folds of the manta that draped her arms. Her voice was low and clear, and when she began to sing Sam Blackmore felt that never had Peruvian or Mexican maiden sung so beautifully to her lover.

"I shall dance, no," she said suddenly, mimicking the broken accent of a Spanish girl speaking English. Her dark eyes shone, her white teeth gleamed, her cheeks showed a soft pink against the black *crêpe* that encircled them. Now she danced a dance of Spain, the pink of her cheeks becoming brighter, as her figure swayed back and forth to the strains of the banjo. Captain Jinks, all bejewelled, joined her. In and out among the laces that strewed the floor, the furs, the *huacos*, the solid silver jugs and basins gathered from the pawnshops of various Peruvian towns, swayed the girl and the dog.

Clearly in loverly mood was Margaret Allison. It was almost two years since she had seen her lover, he who had departed from his own land with a cloud hanging over him. She had waited patiently for this day when he should return to her vindicated, successful, and now that he had come her joy lept into song and dance, and she was spendthrift with kisses and caresses.

"And to think that you have to go back again before we are married?" she said impetuously when the dance had stopped and she was standing beside him in the bow window.

"Yes, that's the very devil!" he replied dolefully. "But, after all, Margaret, it's not so long, that is to say I try to think it's not so long. Ten weeks from now I shall have been down there and settled everything in such shape that my assistant will be running things smoothly and shall be on my way back to New York again. At the very most ten weeks—God speed those weeks, little girl!"

"Yes, God speed them, Sam!" she answered.

Sam began strutting up and down the room. "I say, Margaret," he burst out, "it's a perfectly dandy thing to be rich, to feel that you can walk out and buy a department store or a machine shop, or the fastest horses or the sportiest dogs—— No, no! Forgive me, old fellow!" he cried, stroking Captain Jinks' ear. "Not a solitary dog but you—no rivals in your line!"

"Do take off your overcoat, Sam," exclaimed Margaret, apparently for the first time noting that he was encased in a fur-lined coat of huge dimensions. She began tugging at it. "It's vicuña too, isn't it?" she asked.

"I should say it was! You remember I wrote you I was sending my miserable and despondent tailor enough skins to stock his place, with an order to have this coat done for me when I arrived? Oh, Margaret, the little man's face fairly beamed when I paid him up the whole blamed bill for the past five years with compound interest. I do love to pay a debt that people consider bad, I swear I do! I love to disappoint people in that way. He's got skins to make you a tobogganing set as soon as you'll let me give the order. See here, why not let me give it now, so they'll be ready when I get back?"

"Then you'll have to tell him we're engaged, for I'd have to go to be fitted," objected Margaret. "No either our engagement is to be kept absolutely secret till the very marriage day, or I'll marry you now and accompany you to Peru. Take your choice!"

"You know I'd take the latter quickly enough if there was a decent place to put you at the camp, or if there wouldn't be the handicap of the three directors who are going down with me. Well, the little man can hold on to the furs until further orders, I told him they were for something important later on."

His face half clouded over, then it lighted up again. "Margaret," he said, "what in the name of Heaven are we going to do with all the money? Of course, I'm settling a stiff bit on you for dowry, and I'll build some sort of institution to house lazy ex-convicts in if you suggest, and I'll endow the Home for Lost Dogs in the name of Captain Jinks, and I'm lending right and left to every hard-up friend I've got, but I'd like to be judicious up to a certain point."

"Judicious, you!" Margaret laughed merrily and tossed his hair from his forehead. She patted him on the head, grabbed his fingers and intertwined them with her own, and with the disengaged hand flung to Captain Jinks a chocolate cream, which she found mashed all untidily in the fur-coat pocket. "Always carry chocolate creams for the poodle dog," murmured Sam apologetically, noting a little disdainful look on Margaret's face as she fished it out.

"Margaret," he said suddenly, stretching one of his hands over to a chair, whereon lay some of the presents he had brought, and picking up a large square white cloth which peeped out from among the black mantas, "I've got a little story to tell you, a sad, heart-rending little story, connected with this white manta. You have noticed, perhaps, that it is of coarse material, only a half-wool merino, and the other half cotton."

"Yes," she answered, "and I didn't know it was a manta, for I thought they were all

of black, and I wondered why you brought this to me."

"For the story's sake," he said.

"And now for the story, the sad little story," said Margaret.

He pushed the black manta back from her head so that he might pass his hand over her hair, lightly, caressingly, and began:—

"One day, a few months ago, I was with two or three of the other men, including little Padre Pedro, of whom I've written you so much, taking a trip a few miles off from camp, when we noticed something white ahead of us, fallen among a clump of cactus. When we got up to it the 'thing' proved to be a Peruvian girl of what you might call the peasant class. She might have been eighteen or twenty, not more. She had this white manta wrapped about her just as all the other women wore their black ones. I ran to her at once, for I saw she was ill, and Padre Pedro followed me, crossing himself violently, as though he were trying to ward off the devil. The girl was conscious, and as soon as she saw Padre Pedro she began rolling her head back and forth, and saying in Spanish, 'Take it off, take it off! Father, absolve me before I die!'

"While I was trying to make the poor thing take some brandy from my pocket-flask I asked her what it was she wanted to have us take off, and she touched the white manta she was wearing. I started to unfasten it, thinking it was binding her in some way, when I noticed lying near her a dead baby. I went on fumbling with the manta till she explained that it must be Padre Pedro who took it off, and he kept shaking his head. I yelled to him to take it off, if she wanted him to, or I'd wring his neck, and still the little priest refused. He explained that the white manta was a penance imposed upon her by some other priest for loss of chastity, that the dead baby at her side must be illegitimate. It seems it is a common thing in Peru for a girl who has been betrayed or a wife who has been unfaithful to have a white manta given her to wear as a penance by her confessor. It is never worn, I believe, except for that reason. It is like the mark of Cain or the Scarlet Letter of the old Puritan days. It is to be worn and seen by all that the wearer may be shunned.

"So this poor little thing, wandering like a leper over the Andes, had been wearing the white thing ever since she had confessed her baby had been born, and now she was dying in the belief that her sin was unforgiven unless the white manta were removed. Padre Pedro said he would absolve her, but he could not remove the manta for some absurd reason. There seemed to be some tradition or superstition that she must die in it, and she believed she would go to hell if she did die in it. While I got the brandy down her I turned on Padre Pedro my most convincing string of Spanish oaths, and commanded him to both absolve her and take off the manta, and I scared the little priest so that he did it with all speed. Thank Heaven the girl understood that it was removed before she died, and she also seemed to understand that I was the cause of her forgiveness, for she kissed my hand, instead of Padre Pedro's, when the ceremony was over, and half an hour afterwards she was dead.

"We had a few digging tools with us, and while two of the men went to the camp and knocked a rude box together and brought it over to me, I dug a grave, and we buried the girl and her baby, Padre Pedro seeing to it that she had all the rights of his church. I had Felipe wash the white manta and dry it in the sun, and I saved it for you to help me tell the little story."

Sam had ceased speaking now. There was a gulping in his throat, a tear on Margaret's cheek, as she passed her hand over the coarse white cloth. Then he went on.

"A few days afterwards I found that one of the men who had seen the girl die, a Chilian digger who had left our party without saying a word, and on whom I had noticed the girl's eyes were turned once in a soft, beseeching sort of way, was the father of her child. He had run off from her to our mines, and she had walked clear from the town of Cajamarca, hoping to find him and get him to marry her before the baby should be born. It's too long a story to tell you how we made sure of this, but when I learned the truth without the shadow of a doubt, I happened to be standing near the entrance of the Maria Mine with a pickaxe in my hand. The Chilian swine passed me. I saw again that poor little girl in her white manta with her dead baby, and murder was in my heart, and I swung that pickaxe toward her betrayer with every intention of braining him——"

Sam wiped the perspiration from his brow as he hesitated, and over his forehead Margaret's hand passed lovingly.

"And did you kill him?" she asked quietly.

"No, Margaret. Padre Pedro and Lawrence, the Englishman from Kent that I've told you so much about, sprang forward and gave me a push that sent me three feet to the left, diverting the direction of the blow, and the pickaxe struck against a rock instead of the Chilian's skull."

"And so he lives," said Margaret, and now her hand smoothed back her lover's hair.

"Yes, I presume he lives, but, oh, he's striped and starred and limp and lame," said Sam. "Padre Pedro took up one of the disused mule-beaters, and laid it on to him thick and fast, while Lawrence pinned me down by his British bulldog strength, and the fellow was got away from camp."

Sam slipped from his chair and, with knees on the floor, buried his face in Margaret's lap.

"Margaret," he said brokenly, "that experience has taught me the truth of one of your theories that I used to combat—your theory that every one of us is a potential murderer. I'll never deny it again. I intended to kill that man."

"And if you had, dear, do you think I would have considered you a criminal, that I would have loved you the less, that I would even have blamed you?" she asked.

He lifted his head and looked into her eyes.

"No!" he said.

Margaret got up, folded the white manta into a small roll, tied some white cord about it, and, unlocking one of the drawers of her desk, laid it away gently and reverently.

"In loving memory," she said softly, and as her eyes met his Sam Blackmore saw

that through her tears the smiles were breaking.

"Margaret," he said after a while, "what are you writing now?"

"A book, dear, and your little story has helped me with it. It is a great big, human book, to be called 'The Brothers.' It is to show that we are all brothers in sin. I expect I shall have finished it before you are back, so it will be off my hands when we are married."

"Heavy?" he asked, smiling.

"No, not heavy, but serious, if you will, that is to say, tragedy that dogs slowly upon the heels of comedy, and comedy that trips lightly in the steps of tragedy. That is life, you know, Sam," she added, drawing near to him the hassock which she was sitting upon. "It is the biggest and best thing, from every point of view, that I have ever attempted. I feel within my soul as I write it that it is a great and powerful book. I can't help knowing when I touch the very pulse of life. It is not egotism to know when one has done good work, big work, do you think so, Sam?"

"Egotism!" he cried. "Why, Margaret, you are the meekest woman I have ever known! But, oh Little Genius, what shall we do with these great heart-throbs of yours? Are you any nearer the goal than you were two years ago, sweetheart? You seem to have stopped writing comedies for the magazines—only for me you write your light and airy trifles, and I don't mind if you don't want them published. God knows there's no reason now why you should touch their miserable magazines with a pair of tongs if you don't want to, but I know you've been working at something since I've been away. Out with it! What is it?"

"Oh," she said, smiling, "my work has been interminable, though not all of it has been printed."

"See here, Margaret," he said, jumping up preparatory to leaving, "has this new writer, Frances Farrington Fennimore, or vice versa perhaps the name is, hindered you in your career in any way?"

"I should hardly say she has hindered me, dear. How could she hinder me?"

"Well, her absolutely rotten, senseless trash is published, while your big work is refused. Well, the publishing trade beats me! What do people see in her stuff?"

"Now, Sam, that's not worthy of you, nor of your literary judgment. Miss Farrington has done some fine work of a serious nature, and I thought you liked comedy, too, Sam. She has done some sparkling little stories"

"You call that story in the 'Arlington,' 'The Bell-Hangers,' sparkling?" he asked.

"No, I call that unutterably bad work, but all has not been like that."

"All the same," protested Sam airily, "I've tried my best to laugh over some of her stuff in the magazines you sent down to Peru, and for the life of me I couldn't crack a smile over them. As for her serious work, it's a lot of bathos. It's because you are the most merciful woman on earth that you can see any good in it. Justice couldn't find a sentence that makes even decent grammar of it!"

"Sam!" exclaimed Margaret in amazement.

"True!" said Sam. "And people are saying, so I hear, that she knocked you out of your pet magazines, even in comedy—oh, Lord!"

"Sam, you are absolutely comical in your loyalty! Would you expect me to condemn all other mining engineers because you are a first-rate engineer and because I love you? I say, old man, would you? May I not admire the engineering of the Englishman, Lawrence, and still know that you are a wonder?"

"Of course not! I mean of course you are to admire Lawrence! But if you understood engineering, and Lawrence did bad, blamed fool work, you wouldn't admire him, would you?"

He began pulling on his beloved vicuña coat. "I say, Margaret," he exclaimed, "I've just thought of a scheme—big fool I that it never came to my mind before! Of course your Brother story-book will be published! Of course, all the great short stories you've been doing will be published! Gee whiz, sweetheart! I'll buy you one!'

"One what, Sam?" asked Margaret wonderingly.

"One magazine!"

He threw his overcoat on the floor in his excitement, and began playing ball with a round nugget charm which he took from his watch-chain, Captain Jinks leaping almost to the ceiling in his efforts to catch it.

"One magazine!" repeated Margaret, laughing until the tears rolled down her cheeks. "Oh, Sam, you are the delight of my heart, you are so funny!"

"The Magazine, then—three, a chain of magazines, reaching from Maine to California! Ye gods! The power of money! And they shall run your big books serially, and publish one of your little stories to break the hearts of their readers every month, and as for this Englishwoman invader! Money! Margaret, why in the name of all that's common-sense didn't you suggest this scheme when I told you I didn't know what to do with the millions? Here is my own sweetheart with but one wish ungratified in the world, to have her big things printed, and me with odd-millions in hand and many more in prospect! Let me smoke two cigars on that!" and into his mouth went two Havanas at once, while he puffed first on one, then the other.

Seated at a little distance from him Margaret was shaking with mirth. He turned on her. "You don't think it's a joke, do you?" he asked plaintively, throwing both cigars into the grate. "I swear, Margaret, I'm going to buy a chain of magazines, and if there are none for sale, I'll start some new ones."

"Sam, you don't mean that you are serious?" she gasped, suddenly sobered with the solemnity of his face.

"Why, to be sure!"

"Then you must not dream of it! How could that help me to the recognition I want? My work must be published for its merit's sake alone."

"It will be! It's only the editors, blind and dead in sin, that don't see its merit. The world will see it quick enough, once give the world a chance. The public isn't the fool the editors try to make out it is. Now, Margaret, I know what I'm about! It needn't even be known that you or I have anything to do with it."

"Sam, you must not! I tell you, I don't wish it, and if you do it, I will not offer a single story to any of your chain to publish, so there!"

He turned a disappointed face to her merry one. "Promise me, Sam!" she said as they kissed.

"Oh. all right, I'll promise anything that's for your happiness!" he said, with pouting lips, for all the world like a disappointed boy, and with her arms around his neck, she sent him away with a laughing kiss upon the tip of his nose.

He jumped into a cab, and chuckled all the way back to his hotel. "I didn't tell her I wouldn't buy some magazines, and she'll never know! I promised 'anything for her happiness,' and if this isn't for her happiness, I'd like to know! I wouldn't tell her a lie, I hope!"

Assuredly "money talks," and in whispers, at that, when so bidden, and it hires all sorts of conveniences for facilitating the gathering of quick knowledge of shaky business concerns. The next night Sam Blackmore held in his hands a list of every purchasable publishing property in New York. When he came to the name of one firm his eyes bulged with a pleased surprise, then he actually danced with glee up and down his rooms.

The name was that of Benson and Company, publishers of the "Arlington Magazine" and of many well-known books, among them "The Workers," by Frances Fennimore Farrington. At this entry he found the addendum "On its last legs!"

Then Samuel Blackmore lighted three cigars, and tried his very best to smoke them simultaneously.

CHAPTER XI

SAMUEL BLACKMORE, PUBLISHER

It was four days since Sam Blackmore had got his list of the publishing concerns that were either on the market or willing to be on it. He had not allowed an hour to be lost in coming to his decision as to which one to purchase, for time to him was more valuable than money, since he was now almost due to return to Peru on his flying trip before his marriage.

On a Monday evening after his return from dinner and a long drive with Margaret, he sat before a mahogany writing-table in his suite at the Hotel Algona, pen in hand, writing-paper spread before him, pipe in mouth. Again and again he dipped his pen into the ink, settled himself more comfortably in his chair, and yet accomplished nothing in the way of the letter he was evidently bent upon writing.

Strewn about on the table were various documents containing long lists of figures, and any one familiar with publishing accounts would know at once that these documents were statements concerning the assets and liabilities of a house with large interests. When finally he had settled himself for what he believed was a real inspiration for the letter he desired to write, there was a tap on his door which announced John Henderson, now on a visit to New York from Cincinnati.

Henderson was looking particularly gay and debonair. "Eleven o'clock, I know, Sam," he said, "but just thought I'd drop in for a few minutes. Hum! What's up?" He had drawn a chair near the writing-table, and pointed to the papers strewn about it.

"Why, only this, Henderson," replied Blackmore, "that I've gone and bought the whole blamed business."

Henderson stared. "What business?"

"Benson and Company, Publishers!" explained Sam, pointing to the letter-head of the very paper upon which he was beginning his epistle. 'If you have any dealings to make with Benson and Company, let me inform you that I am IT!'"

"Great Jehosophat! What in the name of Heaven do you know about the publishing business, and what on earth do you intend to do with it now you've got it?"

"Now, Henderson, a publishing house is ostensibly for the purpose of publishing books and magazines, isn't it? I didn't buy the thing to play with, but to work with."

"See here, Sam, you need a guardian. Much money has made you mad. One might think you were a schoolboy of sixteen with five dollars to spend, instead of a man of thirty-five with five millions. Would you mind taking me enough into your confidence to tell me just what you are going to do with this plaything?"

"I'll tell you what I intend to do with this *work-think!* I'm going to publish Margaret's books with it, and I'm going to print her heavy stories in the 'Arlington,' and I'm going to dispose for good and all of that Englishwoman's book called 'The Workers,' and I'm going to see that no more of her fool light stories or her rotten serious ones appear in the 'Arlington Magazine.' That's exactly what I'm going to do. Furthermore, I'm going to give Benson and Company to Margaret for a little wedding present."

Henderson went off into roars of derisive laughter, while Sam glared at him fiercely, his war-look trembling in the light breeze that came in through the open window.

"May I ask," said Henderson, when he had sufficiently calmed himself to speak, "if you have consulted Margaret about this little deal, and if she approves of having such a white elephant put on her hands for a wedding gift?"

"I have not consulted her, and she knows nothing about it. That is to say, I did suggest to her that I buy a magazine, so her best stories could be given to the world, and she vetoed the whole idea, and asked me to promise not to think of such a thing, and said she wouldn't write for the magazine if I bought one. Then I suggested to her a whole chain of magazines, stretching from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific slope, with branch offices in Paris, London, and Constantinople, and she said she wouldn't have 'em."

"Just what I expected," grinned Henderson. "Margaret is a square girl. She wants her work published on its merits, not by favour, not by scheming. So then, in spite of her wishes, you went ahead and did this? Are you going to force the girl to take a wedding present that she doesn't want?"

"She is to have the present without knowing it. She'll never know that she owns Benson and Company until I die. It's a secret between you and me, and my control of the business is also to be kept a secret. I've retained old Benson, the idiot, as the nominal head, at a salary that'll support him in luxury when he thought he was

on his way to the poor-house, though he ought to be kicked out of the tenth-story window for having accepted and boomed that 'Workers' book. However, I shall explain to him to-morrow or next day my views and plans on that subject, and there are, I see (here he consulted a paper before him), only two hundred and fifty-nine copies of the book bound on hand. There will be no more bound, and no more printed."

"If I'm not mistaken, you'll then be killing the goose that lays the one golden egg for your new business. I've known for some time that Benson and Company was tottering and, big as the sales of this book are, that of course could not run the whole concern. But why you've decided not to keep on publishing it, and how can you get out of keeping the contract the house has with the author of the book, is more than I can see."

"That," returned Sam haughtily, "is because you know nothing of the powers of a publishing house. I have seen the agreement with the Englishwoman. There is certainly nothing in it to force either the old house or its successors to continue to publish a book which is a menace to public morality, which that book is. A publisher can at any time refuse to push a book, refuse to print more copies of it, if he is so convinced, I hope."

Sam now glared defiantly at his friend. He kicked a hassock from under his feet and rose triumphant.

"'A menace to public morality' did you say the book was?" asked Henderson from the midst of a coughing fit.

"I did!" roared Sam, standing and pounding the table with his pipe till the stem threatened to break. "It's an immoral book, an indecent book, a book with socialistic tendencies—in short, a hell of a book, and when you came in I was just beginning a letter to the author to tell her so, and to inform her that no more copies were to be issued by *my* firm!"

Here Henderson fairly doubled up with mirth. His face grew purple with laughter. Finally he said brokenly—

"I hope you are not going to write those sentiments to the lady herself?"

"I certainly am, in as polite language as my conscience will permit. The letter will be posted this night before I go to bed, and to-morrow morning I shall call upon her at an hour I will name in the letter."

Henderson went off again. "Tell me, Sam," he said at length, with an air of great solemnity, "tell me now, as man to man, *have you read the book?*"

"As man to man," shouted Sam, "I tell you I have not read *all* the book. I wouldn't soil my mind with such literature!"

"Say, then, a quarter or an eighth of it?" pursued Henderson; but Sam's only answer was an indistinct growl.

"I should think both your letter and your call would appeal to the lady's sense of humour!" mocked Henderson.

"Sense of humour!" sneered Sam. "She has none! Neither have you! But you can't help it. Henderson, I don't blame you! People are sometimes born without it, having every other good gift and grace, and that's the way with you. Actually you see humour, or think you do, in the so-called funny stories this woman has been writing in the 'Arlington Magazine,' while every one I have read has sickened me and given me the gripes. I tried to laugh at 'em, but I couldn't!"

Henderson threatened to succumb to another coughing spell when suddenly he braced up and said—

"That reminds me. What are you going to do about retaining the present editor of the 'Arlington,' and what about Miss Farrington's serial and her stories that he must have on hand?"

"I've already had a talk with Jim Lloyd, and I've told him my plan is to make a serious, high-toned magazine out of the 'Arlington,' instead of the cheap Sunday-newspaper comic-section affair that it has been lately. He bridled a bit, but he said very well, that he wanted to please me, and spoke of Miss Farrington's other work as an example of high-class serious writing, and he said he didn't know what he could do about the serial he has which I told him I didn't like. I told him I'd discuss that with him later, for it's my intention to have a right-down heart-to-heart talk with both him and Benson as soon as I've seen the woman and made my arrangements with her. Lloyd will say nothing, you may be sure. He is as anxious as Benson to keep it from being known that the old firm is no more."

"Was Margaret's name mentioned by Lloyd?" asked Henderson.

"Well, he said he missed Miss Allison's light stories, though he considered Miss Farrington's quite as good, if not a bit superior, and then he informed me confidentially that he and Miss Allison had had a tiff; that Miss Allison *thought* she could write the big things when she was only fit for the light trifles. You can just imagine that almost at that my valour got the better of my discretion. Almost I knocked him down on the spot, but I forbore for the time. It's my impression that Lloyd will get the sack—my very strong impression!"

Again Sam's hair fluttered as though in emotion over the memory of the knock-down that was missed, and he puffed vigorously at his pipe to steady himself for further onslaught from Henderson.

"Sam," said the latter seriously, "you've got the hardest case of love-blindness that I ever came across."

"How so?" bridled Sam.

"Be honest and admit that all your feeling against the Englishwoman is because you regard her as a rival of Margaret!"

"I am honest, and therefore I won't admit any such thing!" answered the engineer doggedly. "At the same time I will say, also because I am honest, that Margaret has written some of the greatest short stories, one of the greatest plays, and two of the biggest books that have been done in modern times, and nobody will publish them, while this woman writes trash and gets it printed!"

He looked now the picture of injured, innocent, believing boyhood, the boy whom Margaret Allison, had she seen him at that instant, would have snatched in her arms with a longing to sing to him a lullaby and put him to sleep. It was just in this pose that Margaret often dreamed of him when he was down among his Peruvian mines, and from such dreams she would awake with a tearful smile and a longing to "mother" the man she loved.

Henderson made the signs of war to show themselves anew, the boyish look to fade away. He brought back the determined man, the almost maddened lover.

"You forget," remarked he, "that very soon indeed this book of Miss Farrington's will be seen on the stage as a play. It is announced to be put on shortly. They say she dramatized it herself. You can't kill her off by refusing to push her book."

"Wait till I see her, wait till I see her! She can withdraw the play or I can buy the theatre. I shall give her the option of taking her book back and getting another publisher to issue it if she can, my firm relinquishing all rights of whatever nature, or I'll retain the copyright and kill the book, and I'll offer her a hundred thousand dollars to leave the country. That's what she's after—MONEY—and she can have it."

"A hundred thousand dollars to leave the country!" repeated Henderson. "Where shall you suggest her going?"

"I don't care a damn where she goes, so it's a long way off where she can't worry the life out of Margaret."

"Is she worrying the life out of Margaret?" asked Henderson. "Margaret doesn't strike me as looking like pining away just now. She's not that sort of woman, and she's not vindictive either. You know how I feel about Margaret, Sam, as though she were a younger sister and you a brother. I love Margaret in just that way. I also believe with you that Margaret is the most wonderful writer of comedy *and* tragedy of the present decade. I don't fail to appreciate Margaret, Sam!"

"Well," argued Sam, somewhat mollified, "don't you see that if this Farrington woman was out of the way, there'd be more of a chance for Margaret? Now, with me the secret owner of a publishing house, and Frances Farrington disappeared, Margaret would be recognized for what she is worth."

"I doubt it, Sam, I tell you I doubt it! It's impossible, absolutely impossible, mark my words!"

"I'll mark them all right, don't you fear What! Going? Well, you can go, Henderson, for somehow to-night you rile me and disturb my peace of mind, whereas I must compose it and get that letter off," and with that he was left alone again, and he became inspired and dipped his pen into the ink quite calmly and wrote his letter.

CHAPTER XII
THE CHASE

Miss Farrington sat in her window facing Washington Square, closely examining the only letter she had received by the morning post. Her face was a study of perplexed study and bewildered amusement, as she peered at its headline, "Benson and Company, Publishers," then re-read it down to the signature. And this was the letter:—

"MADAM,

"I have the honour to inform you that I have personally taken over the business of Messrs. Benson and Company, and shall hereafter control the policy of the house, weeding out such publications as I think should not be issued by my firm, and adding to it such others as I shall deem wise and expedient.

"After having given my most careful attention to your book, 'The Workers,' which was issued by Messrs. Benson and Company, I have come to the decision that I cannot conscientiously push its circulation, and that no further editions of it can be printed by me. I consider your book a most dangerous one to be placed in the hands of our boys and girls who frequent the public libraries, nor do I think it one that should be seen on the parlour tables of our American homes. Without specifying particular pages, chapters or paragraphs, I will merely say that I find the book, as a whole, a menace to public morality, a spreader of socialistic, if not anarchistic, doctrines, and, if read widely, liable to shake the very foundations of our American family life. I am quite aware that you may not understand this, for your viewpoint is English, while mine is thoroughly American, but I simply state to you the situation as it appears to me.

"However, it is not my intention that you shall be a financial loser. The copyright of your book will be turned over to you, and for whatever loss you feel you may sustain by my action I am prepared to reimburse you, and, indeed, make the whole transaction a financial advantage to yourself. In order to discuss arrangements with you in an amicable and business-like manner, and to settle the matter at once, I shall do myself the honour of calling upon you to-morrow morning at eleven-thirty o'clock.

"I beg to remain, Madam,
"Yours very truly,
"SAMUEL BLACKMORE,
"Publisher."

Having read the letter for the fourth time, Miss Farrington looked at the clock. It was just eleven. She peered out of the front window, went into the back room and looked out on to Mrs. Herbert's bit of a garden, which in spring and summer she kept so carefully like a tiny English lawn, with the grass cut every fortnight, and with here and there, in a corner or along the border, some common but beloved variety of English hardy perennial, foliage and blossom reminding her of her homeland. Now the plants looked but dried and withered stalks; snow covered their roots and kept them warm against the coming of springtime. Icicles hung from tne back fence-boards, and Harriet was removing wooden pegs from frozen towels and napery which fluttered heavily from the line.

Somehow the scene from her back window made Miss Farrington shiver, though her rooms were bright and warm, and she walked away, again taking up her station at the front window. In the Square children were sliding along the ice, getting an occasional tumble of the sort which never discourages but emboldens them to renewed effort to keep their feet. Men passed along the pavement breathing frost, the breath of women froze in glistening crystals upon their veils, horses in the road planted their hoofs cautiously and firmly on the hardened earth as they drew carts and carriages slowly along. There were times when the face of the watcher at the window lighted with a smile, quickly followed by a dimness of sight, the dimness succeeded again by a set look of determination that seemed to bode little success to would-be interferers with her plans.

A continuous pacing from window to window, from corner to corner, betrayed

that the woman was restless, and not quite pleased with such turns as affairs were taking.

Finally in her bedroom she sat herself before her dressing-table, and began to rearrange her hair, carefully noting that some wavelets were allowed to fall about her ears and forehead. She stood up and viewed her tall slim figure in the glass, seemed satisfied with it and the gown she wore. Then from her hanging closet she took a large hat and pinned it firmly in place; she draped a chiffon motor-veil about it and allowed it to hang over her face, drew on her gloves and a striped jacket to match her dress, and going again over to one of her front windows, stood there holding the net curtains slightly apart, so that she could see up and down the street. By the clock it was just eleven twenty-five.

Three minutes went by, then four. "A high hat, in tribute to my nationality!" she exclaimed suddenly. "A 'topper'! See, he is looking at the numbers, oh so carefully—surely it is the gentleman himself." And she flew from the window, out of her door, and down the stairs.

At each side of the wide front door there was a small perpendicular pane of glass, very narrow, but unstained and uncurtained. From one of these Miss Farrington saw a tall, handsome, smooth-faced man approaching. He had a determined-looking mouth, he wore a fur-lined coat unfastened and partly thrown back from his chest, a high hat, tilted back slightly, from under the rim of which strayed a tiny lock of wavy blond hair. He stopped before the steps, consulted his watch, and placed his right foot on the bottom step. Certainly this was the gentleman for whom Miss Farrington waited. She could not doubt it. He was now at the top of the steps, about to ring the bell, when she swiftly, quietly, turned the knob from the inside, and made a dash to brush past him. He saw the door open as though by magic, heard the rustle of skirts go by him, and was confronted by an uncompromising back clothed in a striped jacket.

"Madam!" he stammered. "I have come to see Miss Farrington on important business. . . . Are you not . . . surely you must be . . ."

The lady had now got down the steps, and she did not turn her face to him as she interrupted him in a clear bell-like voice, decidedly English in its intonation—

"I fancy you will find her out!"

Mr. Samuel Blackmore, Publisher, almost jumped out of his "topper" as he made a sudden rush from the door and down the steps. The lady was now on the pavement and the gentleman was within three yards of her. Along she sped, gathering up her striped skirts that they might not impede her progress, and after her strode Blackmore. Now she fairly flew along, and, better to see her way, she pushed up the heavy veil from her burning face. Not once did she look back, but she heard her pursuer gaining upon her. Now she lengthened her steps till she cut a most ungraceful figure as she hurried along. She began to realize that the man was much taller than she and that his strides were those of a giant. Her breath came in little gasps, she held her sides as on she flew. Her foot caught in the silk ruffle of her underskirt, and almost tripped her. She grabbed it up, tore the tattered piece off, and darted suddenly across the road, giving her pursuer just enough of a surprise to delay him slightly. Coming out as she now did into Broadway she was confronted by the side door of an office building which she knew had another exit into Astor Place. She threw her whole weight against the door, which opened inward, on to some stairs. Again Blackmore was taken by surprise, but he saw the dash, and as he plunged in, the panting woman had reached the top of the first flight of stairs. Two steps at a time mounted Blackmore, but a turn in the hall-way confused him, while just a few yards off, descending the stairs that led to Astor Place, the woman, breathless, almost fainting, leaned against the balustrade. All her English dignity seemed to have left her. One foot protruded from among ragged skirt ruffles. Her hair, so carefully and wonderfully dressed but a half-hour before, had now become straggled and tossed about by the wind, and her back-comb and tortoise-shell hairpins were tumbling from her head. Her smart large hat with its ostrich plumes was tilted to one side, giving her a peculiarly rakish look, and the hand by which she tried to steady the hat trembled violently. Her attitude was one of half-humbled pride, yet half-despairing defiance; the picture she made was both comic and pathetic, and if now the chase had ended, she must have excited even in the heart of Samuel Blackmore, Publisher, a feeling of pity, if of nothing else.

Her respite was but for a moment, for there came again the sound of advancing, mighty footsteps. She looked back once, then plunged almost headlong down the steps and out of the door and into Astor Place.

CHAPTER XIII

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF FRANCES FARRINGTON

Love is a beautifier, a rejuvenator. It transfigures the plainest features, brings a gleam into hitherto unlightened and, perchance, dull eyes, and casts a wondrous something over the countenance of the ugliest woman. It smoothes away crow's-feet, it makes the step sprightly, it adds grace and comeliness to the figure.

All this, and more, for the ugly woman it will do, and the beautiful woman it glorifies and makes of her a very goddess.

Thus Love was treating Margaret Allison. Finding her a woman of beauty and fascination, it multiplied each grace and charm a thousandfold. Had she been a woman of many intimate friends, they would all have noted the glorifying process that was going on within her, bursting forth outwardly in her eyes, her lips, the poise of her head, the growing fullness of her voice. John Henderson had seen it during his visit to New York, Carolyn Blaine noted it daily, and Captain Jinks felt it, albeit, possibly, unconsciously. Others, whose interest in her was less keen, were less observant, and perhaps more stupid as well. They did not know of her engagement. They considered her a handsome woman, a delightful, kindly woman, full of sympathy, often misplaced, and a woman of boundless ambition. They

fancied she must have had a love affair at some time—for was she not thirty years old, and the type of woman admired of men?—and for some reason had remained unmarried, probably because she cared more for a "career" than she could care for any one man.

To the trinity who noted her growing beauty might be added a fourth, whose comprehension of the miracle was something like unto that of Captain Jinks, a matter of feeling without understanding. This was little Annette, the chambermaid on Margaret's floor at the "Illington," she whom Margaret had met when she left prison, where she had been sent for stealing her mistress's ring. Annette was half French, half Italian, and born in the land of the Little Corporal, Corsica. To Annette, Miss Allison was always the "bonne Signorina," as she quaintly put it, for she incessantly mixed up the language of her fatherland with that of her motherland and a sprinkling of English, to Margaret's great amusement. She spoke fairly good English when she chose to do so, but generally she did not choose, but she had not yet learned to read English. In talking with Margaret she spoke English because Margaret had asked her to do it. Annette complied with the request just as she would have jumped out of the window had her benefactress so commanded her. It was Annette's delight to enlarge Captain Jinks' vocabulary in the matter of counting, and while doing this by means of some easy language books from the book-case, she had herself imbibed a bit of Spanish and German, of which she sometimes made use when in need of expletives.

The little maid sat now upon the floor of Margaret's study with Captain Jinks, brushing out the kinks from his long black hair. A half-hour ago Captain Jinks had emerged from his Saturday afternoon bath which Annette always gave him. It was her own half-day off duty, and she loved to spend it with her "bonne Signorina." For a while, after his tub, Captain Jinks had sat solitary upon the Persian prayer rug, reflectively studying the quaintly formed varicoloured little animals all about him. He shook himself and sprinkled a right-angled triangle of brilliant hue, and possibly wondered if it could have been meant for a chicken. He glared at it in all its dampness, sniffed contemptuously, and concentrated his attention upon the next figure. He hoped he knew a cow! Should it not, by rights, be of brown and white variegated calico hue, with hard, curved horns, meant to impanel foolish dogs, and just to miss bringing destruction upon the wise ones who jumped quickly away after snapping at its heels? Should it not have a hard, long tail, that sometimes snapped you ferociously on your muzzle, when you had supposed it was merely a stationary member, hanging fixedly down between the cow's hind legs? Was this pointed pink animal, of antique weave, fastened on four green poles, a cow?

Thus meditating, suspiciously, scornfully, Captain Jinks had grown drowsy after the exertions of his bath, and now he slept, stretched full length upon the rug, occasionally turning over most accommodatingly between snores, in order that Annette might attach another tangled frill about his paws, or a certain rosette upon his haunches. The sun and the brush together rapidly dried him; his coat became sleek and shiny, and soft to the touch as the finest silk, and while yet he slept and snored, his orange ribbon bow was tied upon his topknot.

What wonder Captain Jinks slept now in the bright afternoon. Not until long after midnight had he gone to bed in his own green cosy-corner the night before. He had performed on the stage at an entertainment given for the joint benefit of the Home for Crippled Children and the Home for Lost Dogs, and besides doing his "turn," he had sold programmes, trotting up and down the aisles with a basket in his mouth, and a placard fastened to the bow of his topknot announcing "NO CHANGE!" so that numbers of the programmes had sold for as much as a dollar apiece, while three particular admirers of Margaret Allison had recklessly expended ten-dollar bills.

Then, too, he had enjoyed no nap on the previous afternoon, what with rehearsing the performance he was to give in the evening. The rehearsal he had done at the Tombs, when he had accompanied his lady there on her rounds. He had a most particular friend and admirer at the Tombs, Jim Riley, one of the keepers, who, strong of muscle, wide of girth, and kind of heart, welcomed the clever little actor, not only on his own account, but for the sake of some of the weary ones who waited for their own "turns" in the court-room. Sturdy Jim had charge of a number of such prisoners, and he always tried to give his favourites among them a glimpse of Captain Jinks, who would be left in his care while Margaret went her rounds, which, as she laughingly reported, always resulted to her in "blessings and copy."

So the yesterday had been a strenuous day, and now Captain Jinks, having been refreshed, rested from his labours.

His lady sat in her carved rocking-chair before a window, a picture of beauty and contentment. She was doing some dainty embroidery work, as became a woman who was to be married within a few weeks, though she worked not upon a trousseau nor indeed upon any garment for herself. The fact was that she was embroidering various patterns of meerschaum pipes on a blue silk quilted smoking-jacket which she intended as a wedding gift for Sam when he should return from Peru, the return day having also been planned to be their marriage day.

For herself, Margaret was not preparing a trousseau, nor could she understand why prospective brides should tire themselves out and make themselves dull-eyed and spiritless with ceaseless shopping and hours standing at the dressmakers', nor why they should blunt their finger-ends in the preparation of linen, and bankrupt their friends with present-giving. Margaret would have told her acquaintances, had they been aware of her approaching marriage and inquired about her trousseau, that she was a prosperous professional woman, and was able always to wear proper gowns, hats, gloves, boots, and that she kept herself always supplied with whatever various social occasions demanded; that her *lingerie*, her toilet silver, her little knick-knacks, were all that the daintiest of women could desire. Furthermore, she could see no impropriety, but only a delight, in having her husband buy for her any articles of wearing apparel that she should happen to find she

needed, even if it should be on the day following her marriage. She had no notion of compliance to foolish customs or absurd conventionalities, and as Carolyn laughingly told her, she would be quite likely to break every solitary rule in the matter of getting married that society laid down. At present, though her lover had given her various and costly presents of chains, brooches, rings, she had nothing which could be called an "engagement ring," though often she wore one or another of his rings on such finger as it happened to fit, and with such manner of dressing as seemed to demand it.

As for the ceremony itself, she expected that as soon as Sam arrived from Peru they would drive directly from the steamer, where she and Captain Jinks would meet him, to a little house on the east side and astonish the Little Dominie with a request to be married in the "front room," with his wife and his niece for witnesses, astonishing him still further by such a big fee as only the mind of her generous bridegroom could originate. She did not wish even such dear friends of her own and Sam's as John Henderson and Carolyn Blaine to be present. Getting married was her own and Sam's affair.

If trousseau and preparations for the ceremony, a choosing of bridesmaids, a planning of wedding tour, took up no part of her thoughts, still they dwelt, and now, almost constantly, upon her lover's return and her future life with him. There had been a time when she counted the months, now she numbered the weeks, and joyed to find that she needed not all the fingers of her two hands for the counting. Several times she had enumerated the days, and twice she had awakened at night from dreams of him and set herself to enumerating the hours that separated them, and because they were so many she cried out in rebellion, and had spent the rest of the night in writing to him, that the burdensome hours might pass more swiftly.

Over the smoking-jacket she sat now and dreamed, not of worldly success, not of the fulfilment of her literary ambition, but of Love's bright future. She saw Annette sitting with Captain Jinks upon the rug, and her heart's desire added thereto a third figure. She could see a child fondling Captain Jinks, a child with blue eyes and blonde hair, a child made in her loved one's image, his son, and already she loved this child who should be begotten of their love. She stretched out her hand to caress him as though he were there in the living present, and then she smiled at her beautiful fancy. She was a woman of imagination, and she joyed and suffered as only the imaginative can. On the wings of her imagination she ascended oftentimes into heaven. On those same wings she descended into hell, and when in hell even she could lift up her voice and praise her God, for up out of hell she knew she could come to do the work for which those depths had prepared her. Just as keenly as she could suffer, just that greatly could she enjoy.

Being imaginative, she was also profoundly religious, as all imaginative natures are. No sect hemmed her in, no creed bound her, no attempts at consistency, which Emerson has so rightly named "the hobgoblin of little minds," closed up the springs of her sympathy and understanding. She never talked of her religion. That and her love were sacred to her. Once, at a social gathering, she had, in conversation, used the expression "Sin, the Redeemer," and had noted the shocked look that came over the faces of Mrs. Gregory-Mills and her ilk. Laughingly she afterwards spoke of the incident to the Little Dominie as they were ascending the rickety tenement stairs to carry thanksgiving cheer to the home of a little newsboy friend.

"Why cast the pearls of your thought before swine?" was all he answered.

Ah, the Little Dominie! What a fee would Sam give him! Margaret was startled from her reverie by the voice of Annette.

"You do grow so preety every day, Mees Allison! I watch your face long time now, while Captain Jeenks been asleep, and I think it be more beautiful than all the saints!"

"Oh, Annette!" and Margaret laughed heartily. "You see, Annette, I am very happy these days. I have a beautiful secret which I will tell you, because you are my very dear friend, if you will promise to keep it a secret also, for I don't want anybody else to know it."

Solemnly Annette crossed herself. "I will nevaire tell!" she said.

"I am going to be married, Annette, oh, quite soon, now, only a few weeks, and you are going to live with me as my own maid and to take care of Captain Jinks."

Annette's little teeth gleamed between her ruddy lips. "You will marry to a good, handsome gentleman, and I shall dress you all preety, and make your hair all so fine and crinkly?" she asked, clapping her hands. "And Captain Jeenks always be for me to wash and comb! I tie his ribbons so!" and deftly she untied and retied the orange bow.

"Certainly to a good and handsome gentleman!" laughed Margaret, "and you'll travel all about with us wherever we go, and I shall teach you to read English, and sometime I think I shall marry you off to a good man, but not for many years, for you are so young, Annette, and you must grow up and learn many things."

Annette shook her head sadly. "No," she said. "Always when you love a man, he make you do the wrong things! Once I love a man. He tell me steal a ring, and I do, and then I go prison, and everybody call me wicked, except you. I have no place to go, only with you when you come to the prison to take me away. Mees Allison, you sure the gentleman which you marry is very good?" Annette looked wistfully into Margaret's face.

"Yes, dear," she said; "but I want to tell you something you perhaps have never thought of before. It is better that every woman should love some man, even if he is a bad man. Love is good for a woman."

"No, no, Mees Allison!" exclaimed Annette. "Not a bad man! Not if it make her go to prison like me!" The girl's eyes grew wide and more wistful, showing a soul struggling amid growing pains, but Margaret understood that the time was not yet for the lesson she would teach.

"Sometime I will explain to you more about it," she said, "but now you must not worry about the stolen ring or anything, but just remember what good friends you

and I are, and what gay times we shall have after a while."

"Verry well, all right, Mees Allison. I will think about how I shall make your clothes all by myself with the fluting-iron better than the washerwoman, and the lace on the white bodice down the front, and I make the wonderful darning I learn in the convent."

Margaret nodded smilingly. She was growing to love Annette, so that it would have been a cross to part with her. Sam had acquiesced instantly to the plan of having her as Margaret's maid. He had never seen her, but he knew her history. As for Annette, she had no notion of who was the "good and handsome gentleman" Miss Allison was to marry. Miss Allison had not volunteered to give further information, and the girl had a certain native delicacy about her that kept her in the place she knew was hers.

Five minutes passed in silence, when Annette broke it.

"Mees Morton, she live in this hotel!" she remarked.

"Oh, no, Annette," said Margaret, who took the remark as an inquiry. "Miss Morton lives away up town."

"No, she live here. She move here today. She have rooms on floor above this, and I take care her room. She try give me one dollar right away and smile, but I take no teeps from *her!*"

Annette spoke very decidedly, almost maliciously, and when she uttered the pronoun there could be no doubt of the feeling she entertained for "her" if one might judge by the emphasis.

Margaret appeared not to notice what Annette was saying. Instead, she was listening attentively to a commotion in the street and the excited cries of the newsboys that came up to her window from the pavement below. They were screaming out something concerning the "yuxtras" which they flourished in the faces of passers-by. The noise awoke Captain Jinks, who sprang to his favourite seat in the bow window, whence he could look down on the busy street below.

"It is time for you to go on duty again, Annette," Margaret said, "and suppose you take Captain Jinks downstairs and send him back to me with the latest paper they are calling in the street."

Annette and Captain Jinks left the apartment. In the hall they passed Miss Helen Morton, but Annette pretended not to see her.

"Diable!" hissed the little Corsican between her teeth as she passed the actress.

A minute later Margaret heard Captain Jinks' quick little patter-patter outside, and she opened the door to him. He carried an evening paper in his mouth, and he rose on hind legs to offer it to her as she stood. He happened to hold it in such a way that the foremost headline could be read as he barked for her to take it. Huge black letters stretched across the page. She had read them before she took the paper from the dog's mouth:—

STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE!
SUPPOSED MURDER OF THE NOTED ENGLISH AUTHORESS,
FRANCES FENNIMORE FARRINGTON!

CHAPTER XIV

THE UNCLAIMED TRUNKS AT THE DOCK

The story which Margaret read in the evening paper of the disappearance of Frances Fennimore Farrington was repeated with additional details the next day in the morning papers of New York and the larger cities of the whole country.

The fact of the Englishwoman's disappearance was, it seemed, first made known by the discovery of two unclaimed trunks at the dock of the White Star Line, Pier Number 48.

These trunks had been delivered at the dock on a certain Tuesday morning, February 14th, by a responsible Transfer Company's waggon, the man who brought them saying that the lady to whom they belonged would claim them that night, as she was sailing on the Wednesday's ship for Liverpool, and they were put among the luggage belonging to the first cabin passengers for the next day's ship. They were, however, never claimed, and the ship sailed without them.

On a label attached to each trunk was plainly written in printed letters "Frances Fennimore Farrington, Steamship 'Majestic,' White Star Line," and on the large trunk was the placard supplied by the steamship company "Not Wanted," while on the small flat box was the sign "Wanted."

One of the dock employés began making inquiries about the unclaimed trunks, and the expressman who had brought them gave the number in Washington Square from which he had carried them. Inquiry at this address brought the information that the lady to whom the trunks belonged had certainly left the house with the intention of sailing on the "Majestic," and it developed that a first-class ticket had been purchased by her, though not in person. At the White Star office in Broadway a letter had been received from a Miss F. Farrington, describing the state-room required, one of the most expensive in the first cabin. The letter had been registered and the price of the state-room was enclosed, and the lady's name had been printed upon the outgoing passenger list, as was shown at the office.

To ascertain whether or not the lady had sailed, leaving her luggage behind her in the rush of catching the ship in the early morning, a cablegram was sent to Liverpool, when it was found that nobody had occupied the room for which a ticket had been sold to Miss Farrington, that no application for an exchange had been made, and that nothing further had ever been heard from the purchaser of the ticket.

A full description of the personal appearance of her late lodger had been given by a Mrs. Herbert, of Washington Square, which description was made known through the Press, but no person seemed to have seen her since the day when she was supposed to have sailed for Liverpool. She had not been seen on the ship. She had never landed in Liverpool. She had never reappeared in New York. The time of the ship's sailing being very much out of season for travel abroad, only a comparatively small number of passengers had been taken

over, and every one on the list was traced and accounted for with the exception of the noted writer, Frances Fennimore Farrington.

Finally the two trunks were turned over to the authorities and opened, in the hope of obtaining clues concerning the missing woman's relatives, since Mrs. Herbert, of Washington Square, had deposed to knowing nothing whatever about them, and advertisements in English newspapers were without result.

Inside the trunks there was not found so much as a scrap of paper with writing on it. There were no letters, no cards, no manuscripts. The trunks were loosely packed, and could have held twice as much wearing apparel as was in them. The clothing they did contain was of very fine quality; the underwear was of the French hand-made variety, but was in no way marked with ink or embroidered monogram. This latter discovery was considered somewhat extraordinary, for the owner of such expensive clothing would naturally, it seemed, have had it marked in some way. Not even the handkerchiefs, of the finest linen, had so much as an initial on them.

Though fine in quality, the sets of underwear, the stockings, and other accessories of a woman's toilet were few in quantity. There was one tailor-made gown of fine striped material, and of the best cut and make. The waist-band of the bodice, which should have had the maker's name and address gilded on it, was of plain black belt-silk. There was one low-cut evening gown, of blue silk and chiffon and trimmed with costly lace; one thin summer silk kimono; a heavy quilted winter wrapper of embroidered Japanese silk; a half-dozen shirtwaists of severe but stylish cut; a dozen collars and pairs of cuffs, and a little box of toilet odds and ends, such as hair-pins, safety-pins, orange-wood manicure sticks, and thread and needles.

The smaller trunk held a small steamer dress, a golf-cape, a steamer rug and a pair of goloshes, two changes of underwear, a bath-robe, and a pair of slippers, also three flannel shirt-waists. In the goloshes and the slippers there was evidence that the name of the maker had been removed. There were a few pads of writing paper, some unsharpened pencils, a small Russian leather portfolio, evidently intended to be used on shipboard as a lap writing-desk. This contained ink, pens, sealing-wax, English and American postage stamps, and other stationery requisites. There was not on a single article in either of the trunks any name or trademark by which the seller or maker could be traced.

The absence of tooth-brush, hair-brush, comb, and toilet requisites was accounted for by the probability that the lady had retained, quite naturally, things of this sort, in order to take them herself in a bag or suit-case to the ship at the time of sailing.

After due investigation and consideration, it became evident to the New York authorities that the owner of the trunks had not gone to the dock, though her landlady insisted that she had certainly started for it, taking a small brown bag with her, which, from the description given of it, appeared to have been of alligator skin. She had left the house in a cab.

The newspapers hinted that Mrs. Herbert had, besides this, given out some valuable and mysterious information at the office of the District Attorney, upon which she had been cautioned not to talk to reporters. One thing only became known as certain, that the police department had started a search for the dead body of Frances Fennimore Farrington, and for the person or persons responsible for her disappearance and murder. For, that she had been murdered, so it was stated in the papers, there could be no doubt, and the District Attorney was merely quoted as saying that he had suddenly become possessed of a most valuable "clue."

Within three days after the first mention of this story in print, the disappearance of the Englishwoman had become the leading subject of discussion in the papers, in certain society circles, and among members of literary clubs. The sensational papers, first to publish the news, were joined by the more conservative press, which daily devoted several first-page columns to the mystery.

And in all New York there was no more interested reader of these articles than Margaret Allison. On the night that the first news was printed Captain Jinks spent the night at Carolyn Blaine's flat, where he was a welcome visitor, his mistress telling Carolyn that she had a sudden call to go to Boston. The next afternoon she was back again at her New York hotel, and found Carolyn and Captain Jinks waiting for her outside the door. During the evening the two friends looked over the papers together.

"It's a queer case!" commented Carolyn briefly, pointing to a prominent headline.

"A very remarkable one, I should say," replied Margaret.

"What is your opinion of it?" asked Carolyn.

"My opinion is that the District Attorney's office certainly must clear up the mystery in a very few days. It is true they have not an over-supply of brains in that office, but what they have should be equal to this. It cannot be possible that a case which looks so very simple can baffle even their feather-weight brains for long. Here it is more than two weeks since the woman disappeared, for you see the newspapers did not know anything of it till long after the 'Majestic' arrived in Liverpool and some time was spent cabling back and forth. They talk of her having been murdered, yet no body is found that answers to her description. Where is the cab-man who drove the woman to the docks? I am absolutely convinced that she could never have been murdered, whatever else may have become of her."

The fire was burning, in the luxurious fire-place, and Margaret began walking to and fro with papers from her desk. Letter after letter became fuel, and bits of manuscripts added to the brightness of the flame. "I must dispose of my rubbish!" she remarked.

"Before you get married?" asked Carolyn. Then she added, "When do you expect Mr. Blackmore?"

"Let me see," said Margaret thoughtfully, as though the number of hours now

until his expected return were not a matter of exact knowledge to her. "He said he could not be away longer than ten weeks, and we are to married within an hour after his return. He left on February 15th——"

"You say he left New York on the fifteenth?" interrupted Carolyn. She glanced up with a bewildered air from the paper, in the midst of reading the sentence, "Miss Farrington was last seen alive, so far as is known, in the early morning of February 15th."

"Why yes, dear," replied Margaret, turning and looking full at Carolyn. "He took the 'Orinoco,' of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, for Colon, which sailed very early on the fifteenth—Wednesday, you may remember it was."

"You saw him off, didn't you, Margaret?" asked Carolyn again.

"I didn't go on the ship with him. It was such an ungodly hour for sailing, and he had some of his directors with him, but naturally I bade him good-bye!" and Margaret smiled.

Carolyn placed her hand to her head in a dazed sort of way.

"Did Mr. Blackmore know Miss Farrington?" she asked suddenly.

"Why, my dear, I never asked Sam if he knew her!" exclaimed Margaret, lifting her eyes in apparent astonishment. "Why should you think he knew her?"

"I don't think. I only wondered," answered Carolyn in a low voice. On her way home that night her mind was in a turmoil of bewilderment and a sort of undefined terror. She remembered very clearly now two or three incidents that troubled her. She had not said to Margaret "Did you know Miss Farrington?"; yet here in the papers was the number of Miss Farrington's boarding place, and it was certainly a number that would be very close to the house from which she had one day seen Margaret walk away. She had not noted the number that day, but she remembered well the appearance of the house, and she would know it again.

The next morning in going to her school she took a round-about walk through Washington Square and passed by the house she remembered so well. The number was that which the papers gave as the address of the Mrs. Herbert with whom Miss Farrington had boarded. All that day at school there kept running through her mind, "And Sam Blackmore sailed on the fifteenth very early in the morning!" She wondered if he had known the missing woman, and if Margaret had known he knew her. Suddenly she remembered Margaret's trip to Boston on the evening when it had become public that Frances Farrington had disappeared. She stopped short in the midst of a question she was asked a member of her class in Latin.

Margaret had made no explanation of the reason of her trip, and she knew that Margaret could not have spent more than an hour in the city. Might she not have sent a cablegram from Boston, a cablegram of warning to someone, which she was afraid would be intercepted if sent from New York?

Then Carolyn Blaine, loyal friend of Margaret Allison, hated herself for an instant, remembering that in Boston as well as in many other cities Margaret probably had protégés whom she was helping with money and advice, unfortunates concerning whom she never spoke to anyone, and in returning faith and cheer she assured herself that Margaret had gone to Boston on an errand of mercy.

CHAPTER XV

MRS. HERBERT'S STATEMENT CONCERNING HER LATE LODGER

Leaving out dropped and misplaced aitches, tears, wringing of hands, lamentations, and appeals to God for confirmation of her declarations, the sworn statement which Mrs. Herbert, lodging-house keeper, of Washington Square, made privately to the District Attorney, and which was taken down by his stenographer, was as follows:—

On a certain date, nearly two years ago, Miss Frances Fennimore Farrington, or a lady who gave her a card bearing that name, had come to her in search of lodgings, and Mrs. Herbert had recognized her as an Englishwoman by her looks, her manner, and her mode of speech. The lady said she desired to live as was customary in lodgings, having two rooms, one as bedroom, one as dining-room, her meals to be served to her privately whenever she should order them.

She had seemed to Mrs. Herbert so very like the titled ladies Mrs. Herbert had been accustomed to serve when she lived in England that she had involuntarily addressed her as "Your Ladyship," at which the lady appeared to be both startled and annoyed, informing Mrs. Herbert that she was to be called by the name on the card. Several times afterwards the lady had also expressed annoyance when Mrs. Herbert had unconsciously addressed her as "My Lady," until Mrs. Herbert, fearing that she might lose a very delightful and promptly paying lodger, had taxed herself to become more careful, and though she had thereafter always addressed her lodger as "Miss," she had remained of the opinion that she was a "ladyship," from which position she had even now no intention of budging.

The lady had told Mrs. Herbert's daughter that she was engaged in literary work, and that therefore she must never be disturbed under any circumstances, and she made it so plain that she did not desire to have so much as her bed made or her floor swept unless she rang for such attendance, that Mrs. Herbert and her daughter had respected her wishes and had never gone to her rooms, except to carry mail, unless they were asked to do so. Sometimes the lady would go out for the greater part of the day, and there were occasions when she spent the night away, using always the latchkey for entering the front door. Asked if she knew where the lady had gone to spend the night on such occasions, Mrs. Herbert declared that she did not know, and that she hoped she knew her place well enough not to make impertinent inquiries.

Miss Farrington had, on the day of her arrival, given explicit instructions that if anybody should call and inquire for her she was always "out," whether or not she happened to be in her rooms, unless she

had previously given warning that she expected someone to call.

After she had resided with Mrs. Herbert for some months there began to be many inquiries at the door for Miss Farrington, but nobody was ever permitted to see her, except two callers, one a gentleman, one a lady. As it here came out that these two visitors had only called just before Miss Farrington had left Mrs. Herbert's, she was told to bring in her description at the end of her statement, so she returned to the earlier days of her English lodger.

The lady had appeared to be always very busy, and sometimes Mrs. Herbert had noticed a light through the crack of her door if she passed it late in the evening, and she could at such times hear the scratching of a pen. On several such occasions she felt sure she had heard the sound of weeping in her lodger's room, while at other times it had seemed to her that she heard hysterical peals of laughter—very quiet, genteel peals, of course they were, so Mrs. Herbert explained.

There was something noticeably sad about the lady's eyes, and it was Mrs. Herbert's opinion that some great personal or family sorrow had sent her away from England to find a home in a new country. Mrs. Herbert spoke of the lady as being "very handsome, very tall, very stately, though very sweet." She had hazel-like eyes, brown hair, a fair-sized mouth, a straight nose and forehead of medium height.

A large number of letters had been received almost daily for Miss Farrington, and they had always been taken from the letter-box by Mrs. Herbert herself, in so far as she knew, although, of course, Miss Farrington, in going in or out of the door, might have found mail for herself and taken it upstairs, for sometimes Harriet was careless and forgot to lock the box. Nearly all of the letters had the names of magazines printed on the corners of the envelopes, and in so far as Mrs. Herbert could remember, there had been no envelopes bearing English postmarks. As for the letters which the lady herself wrote, she had always posted them herself.

The Englishwoman had not appeared to be pressed for money. She had paid a good price for the rooms, always by the month in advance, and upon taking them had said that whenever she decided to leave she would give either one month's notice or one month's rental, as was customary among what Mrs. Herbert called "proper people" in England. The lady lived in every way after the fashion of English people, having breakfast of bacon and toast and tea, or an egg instead of bacon, and she was pleased that Mrs. Herbert served her toast in a silver toast-rack. When she was at home in the afternoon she took tea at five o'clock, and she always drank claret with her dinner and her luncheon. Mrs. Herbert here again explained that her lodger went out to a great many meals, and she had supposed she had friends in the city. Also she reiterated her statement that Miss Farrington was often away over-night, and that on such occasions she usually returned and began her work quite early next morning.

Mrs. Herbert had noticed that her lodger had not much variety in the way of gowns, always wearing either a blue and white or a black and white striped dress made very plainly, but with a certain air about them which she remembered to have noticed in the gowns of Lady Annabel Rockwell, with whom she had once been in service. Asked if there were anything else about her lodger that reminded her of the said Lady Annabel Rockwell, Mrs. Herbert could not remember anything except that Lady Annabel had eyes of colour and expression the same as Miss Farrington.

Sometimes her lodger had dressed herself in a very becoming frock of fuzzy, gauzy goods, as Mrs. Herbert described it. It was of blue, and Harriet had fastened it down the back, and it had always seemed to Harriet at such times that Miss Farrington must be expecting someone to call, yet always Miss Farrington had eaten her dinner in solitary state in a gown the bodice of which was cut very low. Mrs. Herbert here remarked that she had some neighbours who would have described this dress as "scandalously low," but that she, Mrs. Herbert, recognized it as being "properly low, as suited the quality in England."

The lady had never spoken of any relatives or friends, except when she first called to inspect the rooms. Then she said she had been recommended to come by friends, but Mrs. Herbert had not deemed it "proper or becoming" in her humble self to inquire the names of these friends, so she had not the slightest idea by whom Miss Farrington had been sent.

One morning, after Miss Farrington had read a letter which Mrs. Herbert handed to her, she turned to Mrs. Herbert, who was making the bed, and said—

"This evening, at eight o'clock, a gentleman, very tall, with light hair and light moustache, and blue eyes with a smile in them, will call to see me. Whether or not he gives a name, bring him up to my sitting-room at once."

At the stated time the gentleman, who hurriedly gave a name which sounded to Mrs. Herbert like "Sinton," had called and was shown up, and on announcing him, Mrs. Herbert had noticed that Miss Farrington was wearing the wonderful blue dress. The gentleman had remained till about ten o'clock, and during his stay Mrs. Herbert had heard him laugh several times, and he was joined quite frequently by Miss Farrington's delightful little laugh. They seemed to be having a very merry time, indeed. When the gentleman had departed, Miss Farrington had gone down to the front door with him, and was again heard to laugh as she bade him good night. Yet Mrs. Herbert was quite sure that an hour later she had heard the sound of sobbing from Miss Farrington's bedroom, which was next to her own. All this was about eight days before Miss Farrington left.

A few days after this Mrs. Herbert had taken her lodger another letter which seemed to excite the lady very much. She told Mrs. Herbert to hurry with the doing-up of the room, not to wait to dust, and not to disturb her for the rest of the day. Between eleven and twelve o'clock that morning Mrs. Herbert heard the front door slam. Both she and Harriet were in the basement at the time. Going upstairs to Miss Farrington's room, they found she had gone out, and they knew it was she who had slammed the door. Very late that night

Miss Farrington had let herself in with her latch-key, and, meeting Harriet in the hall —Harriet happening to be up later than usual herself—Miss Farrington said she was obliged to leave New York the next Wednesday, and the next morning she paid Mrs. Herbert a month's rental in lieu of notice. All this had happened on a Friday.

Until the following Tuesday Miss Farrington had appeared to be particularly busy, and she did a very great deal of writing. She looked very much upset and put out about something, and her appetite was not so good as it had been. She ate little and worked much; she went to bed late and got up early; and on Sunday she was away all day and did not return until early Monday morning. On Tuesday morning she packed her trunks, thanking Harriet for her offer of assistance, but declining it. In the early afternoon an expressman had called to get the two trunks.

No, Miss Farrington did not herself see the expressman. She had gone out before he came. and she had given Harriet the money to pay for the trunks, telling her to take the cheques and put them on the dressing-table, which Harriet did. Harriet noticed that Miss Farrington had kept back a brown Gladstone bag of small size, for packing the few little things she had not put in her trunks.

At ten o'clock that evening Miss Farrington again went out, carefully locking the doors of both her rooms before she went. She said that she had some matters to attend to before going to the dock, which she would be obliged to do some time during the night, as the ship was to sail very early in the morning, and the passengers must be aboard that night. As Mrs. Herbert and her daughter usually went to bed at ten o'clock, Miss Farrington said good-bye to them then, saying she had the latch-key and would let herself in when she returned. She also said that someone would call for her in a cab, probably about midnight, but that she would herself listen for the door-bell, so that Mrs. Herbert need not be disturbed by so late a ring.

Mrs. Herbert did not hear Miss Farrington return, neither did she hear the door-bell at midnight, though she head someone outside Miss Farrington's door. Looking out then into the hall she saw Miss Farrington's door open and a lady just entering it. She knew that this must be Miss Farrington's friend who was to call for her, and that Miss Farrington had just let her in and had gone into the room ahead of her.

She could not see the face of the lady who went into Miss Farrington's room, as her back was toward Mrs. Herbert as she entered. The lady was dressed entirely in brown—brown dress, brown coat, brown hat, brown gloves, and brown veil, or "fall net," as Mrs. Herbert called it. The hall was well lighted with the gas which had been left burning so that she could easily distinguish the colour of the lady's costume. The lady was of medium height, quite a bit shorter than Miss Farrington.

The two remained in Miss Farrington's room about half an hour, as Mrs. Herbert thought, and she distinctly heard voices, the one which she recognized as Miss Farrington's low English voice, and the other distinctly American, though not unpleasant. What was said she could not distinguish. Suddenly Miss Farrington's door was heard to shut, and then Mrs. Herbert heard steps on the stairs. Looking out again into the hall she found that Miss Farrington had turned off the gas. Then she heard the American voice say, "Quiet now!" in a low whisper. Immediately then, through the darkness, Miss Farrington called up from the lower hall—

"Oh, poor Mrs. Herbert, did I waken you? I'm so sorry. Good-bye again and God bless you and Harriet, and be sure you will hear from me again. I've turned off the gas, so you won't have to get out of bed again, and I have left my latch-key on the dressing-table."

Then the front door was closed, and that was the last Mrs. Herbert ever saw or heard of her lodger. From her own room, which had one window facing Washington Square, she saw a cab turn round in front of the house, then heard a rapid driving away, as though there were fear of being late.

While relating her story Mrs. Herbert received the scoldings of the District Attorney in tearful protest that she "'oped she knew her place, not to happear curious about her betters," when he showed his annoyance that she was unable to describe, except very hazily, the appearance of the lady in brown who had called for her lodger on that fateful Tuesday at midnight. Harriet's examination was even less illuminating, for she had slept through the entire proceedings, having a room on the top floor.

Mrs. Herbert's description of the gentleman who had called was also not one that met with his approval for exhaustiveness—"tall and blonde with merry blue eyes, and a haccent which might be Hamerican and then again it might be Henglish," was certainly not distinctive, but, on the contrary, rather all-embracing.

Yet when Mrs. Herbert had gone her sighing tearful way back to Washington Square, to weep with Harriet over the direful fate of "her sweet Ladyship," the District Attorney nodded his head to one of his assistants in a pleased sort of way, and went over to Pontin's for luncheon.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DEPOSITION OF THE CABMAN.

Soon after Mrs. Herbert had made her statement at the District Attorney's office the cabman who had driven the lady in brown to the house in Washington Square and afterwards drove to the dock of the White Star Line was found.

He turned out to be an honest German-American of easy, contemplative temperament, given to minding his own business to such an extent that his testimony was not so valuable as it might otherwise have been, though it was by far the most important clue to the disappearance of Frances Farrington which had yet been secured.

He stated that at about a quarter before twelve on the night of February 14th he was summoned to the kerb on Broadway, near Eleventh Street, by a lady in brown wearing a veil, who handed him a five-dollar bill, and said quietly—

"I want you to drive to the foot of Eleventh Street to the White Star Steamship Dock, Pier 48. But before going there turn round and take me over to Washington Square, No. —. I must go in there, and you are to wait for me. I don't know how long I shall be in there, but certainly not an

hour. After that you are to drive over to the dock."

The five-dollar bill, which the cabman knew was excellent overpay for so short a trip, even including the wait, put him in an exceedingly good humour, and he had driven the lady in brown to the house in Washington Square with a flying horse.

She had got out and gone up the steps, and evidently someone was waiting for her at the door, which was immediately opened and closed after her. He had not noticed the appearance of the person who let her in, for the door was only opened wide enough for her to pass in, and it was quickly shut.

Having been up late the night before, or rather having had no sleep during the day, the cabman declared that he felt somewhat sleepy, and he fell asleep on the box while waiting for the lady to reappear. He did not hear anybody come out of the house, and was only awakened by the swish of the brown skirts of the lady who was just stepping into the cab. She said—

"Drive to the dock at the foot of West Eleventh Street as I told you."

"Are you both in?" asked the cabman sheepishly.

"Yes," she had answered, laughing, "we are both in. You must have been very sound asleep indeed!"

He had then driven out of Washington Square into Fifth Avenue, turning into Eleventh Street, until they reached St. Vincent's Hospital at Seventh Avenue, where the Christopher Street car track began. Noting this, the lady in brown had directed him to turn back into Tenth Street, as she found the jolting uncomfortable; so he had driven that way, and so arrived at the dock in West Street. On the way he had occasionally heard talking in the cab, but nobody gave him any directions but the lady in brown.

Arrived near the pier, she had put her head out of the door, opening it slightly, and said, "Drive up a little to the right where you see all those people, and then stop. We shall not get out just yet, so wait a few minutes."

A crowd of people were gathered at the place which the lady indicated, many of whom, he thought, were looking at a small building in West Street, which was afire. He had drawn up his horse, and must have waited fifteen minutes or longer when he tapped on the cab door and asked if they would like to get out now. There was no answer. He waited a little longer and tapped again, and still there was no answer. Then he jumped from the box and noted that all the cab curtains had been drawn, and he was surprised to find the cab vacant. Looking about, he saw the lady in brown some distance away, rapidly walking past the White Star Pier and near the Cunard and Wilson piers, and she seemed to be turning to the left. There were several people quite close to her, and directly in front of her was a woman considerably taller than she, who, as he remembered it, was dressed in black. He turned about and drove away, and had thought no more of the occurrence until he had been found by the detectives.

He was questioned closely about the looks of the tall woman who had been directly in front of the lady in brown after they had got out of the cab, but he said she was then too far for him to get a distinct view, and he had merely taken it for granted that she had been the second occupant of his cab, and had taken no further interest, having been well paid for the trip in advance. Her dress might have been a striped one for all he knew, or she might have been wearing a long black coat. He could not tell for sure; he merely remembered that she wore very dark clothes. Whether the two spoke together after they got out of the cab he could not say. In short, he declared he had told everything he knew.

Asked if he could identify the lady in brown if he saw her again, he felt very sure that he could, for once she had lifted up her veil from her face when she spoke to him. He believed that he would also know the brown costume again, as it was rather peculiarly made, and he remembered that it rustled very distinctly. It was this rustle that woke him up as the lady was getting back into the cab in Washington Square.

He was then asked how it was that he had not heard the rustle when the ladies had got out of the cab at the dock, and he could not imagine why that was. Yes, he remembered now that he had told the lady that it was the rustle that woke him up, when she had laughed at him about his sleepiness.

This latter part of his statement, though apparently of little interest to him, certainly made an impression on the District Attorney, for he had him repeat it twice to make sure that there could be no mistake about it. The District Attorney saw that it showed there was evidently some important reason why the lady in brown and her companion had desired to get out of the cab without being seen by the cabman, and the lady having been warned that her dress made a noise loud enough to attract attention, must have held it about her in such a way that it could not make the slightest sound.

The cabman did remember that during the wait at the dock he had himself been interested in watching the fire, and that his head had been turned in the direction of West Street. This would account for his not seeing the two ladies get out of the door nearest the pier. Certainly, he admitted, if they had desired to get out without his knowing it they could have done so by being careful not to make a noise by turning the handle of the door. Indeed, it was more than likely that the door had not been properly shut again after the lady in brown had spoken to the cabman. Questioned again about the curtains of the cab windows, the cabman was absolutely sure that they were up when the lady had first taken the cab in Broadway, and up while she waited in the Washington Square. He judged they had been pulled down instantly by the lady who first got into the cab before he drove away from the Square. He was asked by the District Attorney to try to "refresh his mind" and see if he could remember having heard a single word that had been spoken inside the cab while he was driving to the dock, and he promised he would. A few hours later, as he sat over a mug of beer, he suddenly remembered something, a whole sentence which, it seemed to him, was of tremendous import, and again he visited the District At-

torney. What he now remembered will appear later on.

Through subsequent investigations no other persons could be discovered who had noticed the two women in the vicinity of the White Star Pier or near the Wilson and Cunard docks. This was perhaps due to the fact that most of the passengers for the "Majestic" had already arrived and gone aboard and to bed, while the midnight loungers about the neighbourhood were intent upon looking at the West Street fire.

CHAPTER XVII

THE DISCOVERY OF THE MISSING LINK

Never before in the history of mysterious disappearances in New York had the newspapers printed so many columns in which so little real information was given to the public as in the case which now became known as "The Englishwoman Mystery."

Reporters sent out with instructions to bring in three columns, four columns, or five columns, as the case might be, brought back the desired number of columns, and thus added exultantly to their space-bills, yet the information which they professed to give concerning the most celebrated mystery of the day was not obtained from the police authorities nor at the head-quarters of the District Attorney. All the comfort they got from the latter gentleman was a declaration that he and his assistants were working day and night with very satisfactory results, that he was in possession of valuable "clues," and that an arrest or arrests might be looked for soon.

The District Attorney was somewhat of a favourite with the "newspaper boys," and it was generally believed that he had taken some of them slightly into his confidence on the condition that they keep out of print certain important features of the case, and that they had loyally kept to the bargain. Nevertheless, space must be filled, scareheads manufactured, and the public properly agitated about the disappearance of the woman who was variously named as "Lady Frances Farrington," "Lady Farrington," without prefix of Christian name, and in several instances as "Her Grace."

As for portraits of the missing woman, they were published by the dozens in every conceivable pose, though, curiously enough, always she wore a striped costume of some sort, whether it were cut high or low, fastening in the front or down the back. In the making of these portraits artists on certain of the evening papers must have grown opulent, since the manufacture of portraits in newpaper studios is a good paying business, especially if they run to over a two-column cut, and those of Frances Fennimore Farrington often filled five columns across, and took up half the length of the page.

She was represented with golf-sticks, in tennis costume, in ball gown, in reception dress, in summer frock; in steamer dress sitting on a steamer chair; seated at a table at afternoon tea, with long, aristocratic fingers daintily grasping the teapot handle; she reposed on a divan, with pad and pencil, engaged in literary composition; she peeped from behind a window pane in Washington Square—a window in Mrs. Herbert's house most carefully drawn; and she was shown gliding languidly among the trees of the park, and stooping down from a great height to speak kindly to bedraggled babies and pat the backs of unkempt street dogs.

And always tall, very tall, indeed, they made this lady of the striped gown, till sometimes in the pictures where she was depicted *en promenade*, her well-poised head with its patrician lines seemed almost in danger of getting lost among the branches of trees and the projections of lamp-posts.

Not only did the New York papers make the mysterious disappearance their leading topic. Even the San Francisco papers published daily telegraphic reports on the subject, copied portraits from the New York papers, and had scathing editorials concerning the slowness of the New York police department, which did nothing, apparently, but make a daily declaration that it had obtained fresh "clues" and was on the track of the murderers; while as for the Chicago papers, they found difficulty in containing themselves in polite language when they considered the fame of the lost lady and the fact that she must be known, at least by sight, to hundreds of New Yorkers.

Special detectives were appointed by certain newspapers to drag the water surrounding Manhattan Island; to sit on Mrs. Herbert's doorstep in Washington Square; to apply to her in the guise of would-be lodgers seeking such accommodations as she had to offer. Had it not been for the fact that she had been forbidden to let her late lodger's rooms to anybody until the mystery was cleared up, the English landlady would have made a tidy sum of money by letting them at four times their regular price to a young newspaper woman detective. This young woman got a peep into the rooms while she was on the second floor resting from her ascent of the stairs. She had calmly opened the door of a room, which she thought must be the right one, saying to Harriet Herbert, "Is this room for rent?" Harriet had replied that it was already let, which was true, for the authorities paid Mrs. Herbert a reasonable price for allowing it to be empty. But Harriet opened her mouth wide at the offer which the young woman made her if she would put out the present tenant.

The young reporter, however, made good use of her opportunity to visit the late home of the woman of whom her paper always spoke as "Her Grace." She wrote a full description of the house, and then dictated "notes" to an artist, who immediately made a photograph of "Her Grace" at tea in Washington Square, waited on by her landlady's daughter.

For a time the authorities of Scotland Yard in London were also at work prying after the antecedents and the relatives of the missing Englishwoman, but they finally gave it up as being none of their affair. Several New York papers and one Chicago journal had private detectives at work in London and in small country places where the name of Farrington or Fennimore was said to be known. Finally these returned to New York and began again to walk about the White Star dock or sit on Mrs. Herbert's front steps.

In the midst of all the newspaper ex-

citement, the police department kept remarkably quiet, though not inactive, and when the District Attorney stated that he had valuable clues which he had no present intention of discussing, he spoke with reason. Daily now, and sometimes two or three times a day, he received visits from a woman who was always allowed to see him immediately without giving her name to the clerks in the outer office, and always after her departure a smile of satisfaction flitted across his face. Daily now he and his chief assistant would refer to the "chain," and the additional links needed to give it complete length and strength, and one day they got the missing link in the form of a statement from an oysterman who did business at the foot of Gansevoort Street in the vicinity of Pier 56½.

The oysterman, Charles Anderson by name, had discovered the body of a woman floating on the water immediately surrounding the row of oyster scows which are situated at that pier. He deposed that he had been standing leisurely at the back of the third scow in the row, on the small projection that served for a sort of back porch. The oysterman was whittling at a stick and looking at a large pile of shells on a sloop near by when his eyes, roving back toward his own feet, noted an object gradually rising to the surface. It was after eight o'clock and rather dark in the vicinity of his scow, yet the few lights that were scattered about were sufficient to show him that the object was suspiciously like a human body in appearance and that it wore skirts.

Now the oysterman had happened to read in the papers of the disappearance of the young Englishwoman, and he remembered that a reward had been offered for information leading to her discovery, dead or alive, or information concerning the whereabouts of her kidnappers or murderers. He said that it was his recollection of the offered reward that kept him from crying out and making his discovery public, and it was also his recollection of the reward that made him steady and strong to go quietly from the porch of the scow, stepping across to the bow of the sloop, which would get him nearer the water's surface, pick up the body in his arms, carry it into the scow through the back door, lock that door, and then, going to the nearest public telephone, inform police head-quarters of his discovery, and then go back to the scow to guard the body which lay among the oyster shells.

Immediately that night the body was taken in charge by the authorities and conveyed to the Morgue. It was that of a tall woman whose age it was difficult to fix with any degree of certainty, for the face was disfigured and unrecognizable, but the Coroner's physician who made the examination and performed the autopsy, said that there was every reason to believe that the woman was quite young, and that he would vouch for thirty-two as being the greatest number of her years, though he inclined to the opinion that she was well under thirty.

She had dark brown hair, and, at the time of the finding of the body, her eyes were hazel. She wore a well-fitting black and white striped dress, which, though shrunken and faded by its contact with the water, was in such condition as to show that it was of fine and expensive material and had been made by a dressmaker, or more probably a ladies' tailor, of repute, although no name was on the waist-band. It was severely simple and bore evidence of being an English tailor-made costume, as did also the long black coat worn over it. The shoes which the woman had on were of English make it could be seen, yet they, too, were without sign or symbol of their manufacturer. Her underwear was fine and plain, hand-made, and without markings. It was the opinion of the coroner's physician at the inquest that the body had been in the water about five weeks, and had been well preserved by the cold salt water in which it had lain.

When Mrs. Herbert arrived at the Morgue she could tell nothing by the pitiably horrible face which had been injured by some paddle wheel, but she testified that the height of the woman and the clothes she wore, especially the striped dress and the hat which was still pinned rustily to the brown hair, convinced her that the body was, without doubt, that of her late lodger, Frances Fennimore Farrington, and her testimony was borne out by that of her daughter Harriet. They were both instructed to keep quiet for the present, and not to speak of the finding of the body. After their departure, the underwear in the trunks left by Frances Farrington at the White Star dock was compared with the soiled, water-soaked linen which enfolded the body found by the oysterman. It proved to be of the same weave and like it in every particular.

So it was that the District Attorney came into his own—the Missing Link.

And at the very hour when this body lay among the oyster shells in the oyster scow hundreds of New Yorkers filled a theatre in Broadway to see the first production of the dramatization of Frances Fennimore Farrington's great novel, "The Workers." Before the curtain rose on the first act the manager went to the front of the stage and stated that before the disappearance of the gifted author she had made every arrangement with him in writing for the production of her play, even going so far as to suggest certain persons for certain parts, which suggestions he had complied with wherever it was possible. Already he had delayed the production, hoping against hope, that some word would come explaining the mystery of the author's disappearance, but now he felt, in justice to the theatre-going public which he served, that this great play should no longer be kept back from them. He spoke feelingly of the talent, aye, the genius, of the brilliant young playwright, and tears filled his eyes and sobs burst from the audience when he told of his regret that she could not stand before them that night at the call of "Author!" to receive their plaudits.

In the second row of the first balcony, directly in the centre of the building, sat Margaret Allison and Carolyn Blaine, keenly watching the stage and listening with close attention. In the middle of the last act Margaret bent her feverish looking face toward Carolyn and whispered—

"Tell me, Carolyn, what do you think of this play?"

Carolyn looked at her lovingly, sadly, and pressed her hand under her opera cloak.

"It is a great play, Margaret," she said softly.

"Ah!" murmured Margaret, and she drew in her breath as though she suffered pain.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MISS MORTON PAYS HER DEBTS.

It was the morning after the opening night of "The Workers," the play which the newspapers united in calling "the greatest play which a New York audience had witnessed during a decade."

Margaret, at her work-table in her study, was looking over the criticisms of the play in the various morning journals. Annette was tidying the rooms. She had tripped through the study, past Margaret, into the bathroom and bedroom. She gathered the soiled linen together, putting fresh towels and bureau scarf in its place, and now she lingered lovingly over Margaret's dressing-table, giving careful, thoughtful rubs to the already brilliant silver, luxuriously spread out upon it. Suddenly Margaret was startled by an exclamation from the bedroom.

"Sacre Bleu! Der Teufel! Santa Maria! Diavolo!"

Margaret smothered the laugh that sprang to her lips and eyes at this picturesque conglomeration of continental profanity.

"Annette dear," she called, "what have you done? Such a profusion of swear-words is shocking! Have you broken any of my cut-glass?"

Annette walked haltingly to the doorway, and a look at her tear-stained little face quickly changed the expression on Margaret's own, which had become merry in spite of her professed indignation.

"No, Mees Allison, I nevaire break anything of your preety bottle. I theenk about the very bad man which make the women trouble. Always the woman she pay up the bill—like they say in this country. Always she go prison, she have the baby, she do the wrong when she love a man!"

"Annette, child!" exclaimed Margaret, drawing the little Corsican girl to her. "Are you in fresh trouble of any sort? Has any man harmed you more than I know? Tell me!"

Annette kissed the soft white hand held out to her. "No, Mees Allison, it do nothing more than you know. I theenk not now about myself. It is Marie, my friend, which have so much trouble and lose all her clothes to the landlady which she pay not her board to. She the friend which you gave me the clothes for, the nice preety dress and the hat and everything what you do. You remember, Mees Allison, how last week you give me the things for my friend?"

"Yet, Annette, and does she need more help? Shall I give you ten dollars for her?"

"Mees Allison, I hear not from her since I gave the clothes. She say then she go to Sheecago to find that bad man which she love, and I say no, Mees Allison find you a place to work at the hair-dressing, and I tell her not go. He not worth to find and marry. I tell her it is the love for the bad man which make me do the wicked thing. But now I hear no more from her, I hunt for her but I do not find."

Margaret was patting the girl's hand now. "Poor Marie!" she said. "Annette, do you know who the man is? Did you ever see him? I think if I only had something to go on I might make some investigation."

"I never see him," sobbed Annette, "and Marie she never tell me his name. He from South America, maybe Brazeel. I hate the Brazeelian men: You know why, Mees Allison?"

"Yes, dear, I know," answered Margaret softly, for she remembered that Annette's lover had been of that land. Then she continued:

"Annette, I will try to think within the next few days what is to be done, but it is so hard with nothing to go on, or, at least, so very little. But I will try to study it out; and now you must go to the other rooms and attend to the other guests. We must not forget that for a few weeks longer you are chambermaid here for these two floors, and not my own maid. Ah! What gay times we shall all have very soon now!"

She tried to brighten up the girl with laughing, but Annette returned but a sorry little smile.

"I have go now to Mees Morton's room. Diable!"

"Very well, then, and come to me again this afternoon."

Annette stood with her back to the door, duster and whisk-broom in hand.

"Mees Allison," she said, "I love you better than the Holy Virgin. If she tell me do one thing, and you say no, then I do what you say, always, always!"

"You must do what is right, dear, no matter who tells you to do it."

"No," protested Annette. "If people do wicked to you, I shall do it back to them. Always the wrong turns to you I shall do back."

"No, no," said Margaret. "You must do wrong turns to nobody."

"Yes, I do it," returned Annette, and opening the door of the vestibule, she walked briskly away.

Miss Helen Morton, leading lady in Miss Allison's successful comedy which had now run for so long a time, was sipping chocolate and eating toast when Annette reached her rooms.

"You are late, Annette," she said. "Have you done Miss Allison's rooms before mine?"

"I do the work which is my duty," answered Annette doggedly.

Miss Morton laughed. She did not catch the gleam of hatred and distrust in the girl's eyes as she passed on to the bathroom.

"Annette," she said, "is Miss Allison in her rooms this morning?"

"No!" replied Annette shortly.

"You say she is not at home?"

"No! She go out!" snapped Annette.

"Are you sure?" pursued the actress.

"Oh, so very sure!" called back Annette, as she banged at the porcelain bath-tub with every intention of chipping it, and thus, she hoped, allow Miss Morton to get a painful cut when next she was in it. "I say she ees out, and she be out all morning."

It was Annette's intention to save Miss Allison the trouble of having to entertain Miss Morton, and she believed that this object would be accomplished by declaring that the lady was out. However, it would appear that the assurance of Miss Allison's

absence from home was just what Miss Morton desired, for almost immediately after Annette's departure, she slipped off the rustling silk skirt which she had on, donned a soft grey noiseless costume, examined carefully a bunch of keys which she took from a safe, also a roll of greenback notes, and descended to the floor below. She did not make use of the elevator, and she peered down the stairs to ascertain if any of the maids or the hallboys could be seen as she stepped softly from stair to stair. At the foot of the stairs she made a quick turn, and at the door of Margaret's apartment she stopped and listened at the letter-box. There was not a sound from the suite beyond. Cautiously she pressed a flat key into the lock, softly then she stepped into the vestibule and pushed a bolt.

The first door from the vestibule opened into the drawing-room, which, in turn, opened into the room Margaret used as a study, and looking through into this room, the astonished actress saw Margaret sitting at her desk. Quickly Miss Morton stuck the bunch of keys which she held into an underskirt pocket, then cried out gaily as Margaret looked up with an exclamation of surprise—

"Good morning, Miss Allison. I rapped but could not make you hear. Did you know that your outer door was open? The latch could not have caught."

"Really!" said Margaret, without a perceptible change of countenance. "That must have been very careless of me, and the first time it ever happened, I assure you. Will you sit down?"

"I know you will approve of my errand," began Miss Morton, then suddenly she turned from the chair that was offered her. "I must have dropped my handkerchief in the hall. Excuse me just a moment while I look," she said, and she rushed toward the vestibule, noiselesssly pushed away the bolt which she had fastened on entering when she believed the rooms to be empty. If Margaret suspected the manœuvre, she made no sign when Miss Morton returned to the chair ostentatiously flourishing an embroidered handkerchief which in the vestibule she had whipped from her shopping bag.

"As I said," began Miss Morton again, laughing, "I have come on a welcome errand. I am here to pay my debts."

Now from the bag she produced a roll of bills, counting out fifteen tens, which she laid on the desk.

"You are sure you can spare it?" asked Margaret. "I fear that even with the increase in salary I finally succeeded in getting Watkinson to make for you, you are behindhand with other loans from people who cannot afford to wait so well as I."

"I've had a windfall," laughed Miss Morton. "Small legacy—not much—from a distant relative. Yes, I can actually pay every debt I owe now, thank Heaven!"

"Well, if that is the case, I am certainly glad for you, for it must be a relief to your mind," answered Margaret quietly, and she brought forth her own pocket-book and stuffed the notes into it.

"You went to the play last night, of course?" said Miss Morton. "That is the drawback of being an actress oneself. One can so seldom manage to go to see other great actresses, except at side-show *matinée* performances."

"Yes, I saw it," answered Margaret.

"What did you think of it, calmly now, without prejudice?" asked Miss Morton, with a sneer only half wrapped up in a smile.

"Why do you say 'without prejudice' and 'calmly'?" asked Margaret, glancing up with a queer look. "Do you think me a woman of prejudices and likely to judge without proper calmness?"

"Oh, no, not usually. But in this particular case, you see, I thought you might have some prejudice against the author of the piece."

"Well," returned Margaret, "though it might be allowed that I could have some prejudice in criticizing or estimating the worth of this particular play, whether for or against it we will not discuss, I will say that the audience certainly seemed to think well of it, and that I would not be disposed to dispute their verdict."

"You mean that it is really a great epoch-making play?" asked Miss Morton, scanning Margaret's face.

"How can one say a play is 'epoch-making' when it has been performed but once? Who can judge of that but the people who live in the years to come? But I will say that I like the play—yes, I certainly can say that!"

Miss Morton laughed. "You surely are not enthusiastic!"

"My enthusiasms are sometimes controlled!" returned Margaret.

"What do you think has become of the woman, anyway?" asked Miss Morton.

"What woman?"

"Why, the author of the play we were discussing—Frances Fennimore Farrington, of course! Do you believe she's dead?"

"I have no reason to think that! Why should I?"

"It seems to be the general opinion. Five weeks, and not a word of her alive!"

"Well," returned Margaret, "let the brilliant police department of New York solve the mystery! Five weeks, and not a thing done so far to explain it! Actually, it is too absurd!"

The two women had now gone into the drawing-room, Captain Jinks following at Margaret's side.

"He is a dear dog!" murmured Miss Morton, putting forth a hand to stroke him. The dog lifted his great brown eyes to her, then drew back, at a slight pressure on his neck from Margaret.

"Is it true, the story about his being a pick-pocket's dog?" pursued Miss Morton. "Come here, Captain Jinks, and open this bag!" She held out her shopping bag to the dog while yet waiting for an answer to her question, and Captain Jinks merely gazed back at the actress without moving.

"Who told you such a story about my dog?" asked Margaret angrily.

"Doesn't everybody know it?" asked Miss Morton.

"No, everybody does not know it. Indeed, you yourself did not know it until very lately!"

"Dear me! Because I never happened to speak of it before, does that prove I didn't know that Captain Jinks has the shadiest past of any dog in New York? Let me see, what was the real name of his master, and where is he?"

"Shady pasts, whether of men, women, or dogs, are not supposed to be referred to

in their presence, so we will spare Captain Jinks' feelings," said Margaret brusquely.

"Shall you be in this afternoon?" asked Miss Morton.

"I presume so, but I have much to do, so I shall not be able to receive visitors. I say this, Miss Morton, because you have done me the honour to make frequent calls upon my time recently, and I have many interests, and much responsibility, and just now I am particularly engaged in finishing a book and in other matters."

The actress rose to go. "I was not intending to visit you this afternoon," she said. "Fact is, I am going out to hunt for another job, for I don't believe your play will run very much longer, and I must keep myself before the public."

"There will be no difficulty in your getting another part in another play, I am sure, though Watkinson says my play is good for another year."

"I doubt it!" said Miss Morton, and now she stood at the vestibule door. "Good morning!" and Margaret went back to her study, and this time she was careful to shut her door.

CHAPTER XIX

THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S COUP D'ETAT.

In the afternoon of Miss Morton's somewhat peculiar intrusion upon her privacy, Margaret sat in her bedroom in the midst of confusion, reading and re-reading some characters written in shorthand upon two torn bits of light brown wrapping paper. There was a light in her eyes and a smile upon her lips as she pored over the closely crowded forms which seemed to show that the writer, short of writing paper and even a pen—since a lead-pencil had been used—had endeavoured to put just as long a communication as possible into small space. There was a knock on her door and quickly she stuffed the paper into an opening of her bodice, ere she admitted Carolyn, who had stepped in for some tea and gossip on her way home from scohol.

"What an upset!" exclaimed Miss Blaine, as Margaret conducted her to the bedroom. "I have always considered you the neatest of the neat, but here I can't find a chair nor even the bed nor a space on the floor to sit, what with your veils and gloves and laces spread all over." She looked about her in despair, while Margaret, still more despairingly, fumbled about in bureau and wardrobe.

"Why," she answered, "I can't seem to find anything I want, although, as you know, I can usually put my hand on my belongings in the dark. One of my dresses is gone, a hat has disappeared, veils and gloves are not to be found, and, worst of all, I have looked high and low for a manuscript which I simply must have. For some time now I have suspected that somebody has been coming into my rooms and meddling. Every once in a while I discover that a bureau drawer has had a foreign hand stirring up its depths. Certainly several times I have found my wardrobe door unfastened, though I always keep it securely bolted to prevent dust getting in, and I do vow my desk has been tampered with."

Margaret put her hand to her eyes and actually brushed away a tear, much to Carolyn's amazement.

"The dress and odds and ends can be replaced, though it's a shame to lose that last frock and hat that Miss O'Callahan nearly bankrupted me over, and they're the stunningest things in New York, but losing the manuscript is enough to send me out of my head."

The two began putting things back in place. "Dear," said Carolyn, "you must admit that if anybody wants to steal from you, there is a good opportunity when you and Captain Jinks are out together, and then you do have such queer people about you. Now, that foreign chambermaid, Annette. . . ."

Margaret threw a newspaper at Carolyn's mouth.

"Carolyn Blaine, stop that!" she cried angrily. "I won't listen to your nasty uncharitable suspicions! I'd trust Annette with my soul. Can't you ever forget that she once stole a ring and was in prison?"

"Frankly dear, I cannot!"

"Then keep your recollection of it to yourself, and don't refer to it again!" retorted Margaret hotly.

Suddenly she placed a trembling hand on her friend's shoulder, looked softly, lovingly into her eyes, and said with sweetly pitying voice—

"Carolyn, the Kingdom of Heaven is not within you, nor will it ever be, until you have become a sister to Annette Lemoyne, and until you acknowledge that sisterhood!"

"Margaret," murmured Carolyn tearfully, "am I so hard?"

"Yes; you are hard like a stone, and you need crushing to the earth!"

"Oh, Margaret, I try not to be hard! Indeed, only to you do I seem to appear so, but I cannot shake off prejudices, and in those prejudices I include someone else whom you are always befriending, another of your protégés."

"Who is that?"

"Helen Morton."

"Ah!" said Margaret, and now there was a look of half pity, half bitterness, in her eyes and round her mouth. "She is different from Annette. Love has saved Annette, the love that leads to sin, but this other woman—well, perhaps she too may be saved, though as by fire."

"Has she repaid you the money you lent her?" asked Carolyn.

"Oh, yes—why, Carolyn, I never told you I lent her money!"

"No," laughed Carolyn, "not until just now. I spoke at a venture. What you ever saw in that ungrateful little minx to excite your interest is more than I can guess."

"Oh, I saw she was a good mimic, and I knew she was always getting stranded, and I felt sorry for her. You must admit that she has made a success of the part in my play."

"Yes, after you were yourself out teaching her how to act!" retorted Carolyn.

Another knock on the door announced Annette. "Yes, Annette, do come in!" exclaimed Margaret. "Be a nice kind girl and straighten the bedroom and arrange the bureau drawers."

"How she does look at you, Margaret. She has a dog-like devotion in her eyes that seems to say, 'I would die for you!' "

"I believe she would. Also I believe she

would make anybody else die for me. Her loyalty almost frightens me. Her mixture of blood is a good combination in some ways, in others dangerous. She loves whom she loves and hates whom she hates like a true Corsican. She loves me and she hates Helen Morton. She reminds me of Captain Jinks in that, and it seems, too, to be a sort of instinct, which she could not explain if she tried. Well, I have told you that she is to be my maid when I am married, and I shall try to train her little soul, though as I said, Annette is already among the redeemed."

Margaret lighted the spirit lamp and swung the shining old-fashioned Peruvian kettle over it, and soon they were drinking tea.

"And oh, Carolyn," she went on, with bright eyes, as she stood up from filling Captain Jinks' saucer with milk, "I have my book, 'The Brothers,' nearly finished! Just two chapters more, and a bit of revising here and there. I have tried to make it a sort of American *Les Misérables*, in regard to circumstantial evidence and capital punishment."

"Margaret, how will you get such a novel published?" asked Carolyn.

"I seem to feel it must be published!" returned Margaret confidently; then jumping from the serious to the gay, she continued, "I've taught Captain Jinks a new trick. He can dance the Minuet. I play it on the piano and he does it with his Roosevelt bear. He dances in so sad and steady and lordly a manner that it will almost kill you to watch him. Just give us the music, Carolyn, and let me be his partner."

"Minuet, dear, with his own lady!" said Margaret, as the dog shook his silky curls and bounded to the floor. "Very slow, and sad, and tender to his lady, taking her hand and bowing!" went on Margaret, looking clearly into his brown eyes.

Captain Jinks bowed his head low to the floor, then raised himself on his hind paws, and the graceful dance began, while Carolyn, fingering the piano with her back turned to the instrument, in order that she might watch, looked on with glistening eyes. Down went Captain Jinks' head in loving worship of his lady; down bent Margaret till her forehead touched his cold nose. They separated, approached and bowed again, and so entranced were the three of them in the beautiful dance of the olden time that they did not hear a rap on the door, if rap there was, and Margaret, facing to bow again to her little partner, saw a man standing in the room with his back against the door.

She recognized him as a court officer, even before he handed her a large legal-looking document. She took it in her left hand, the hand that was nearest the door where stood the man, and as she shook it apart, and the full contents of the page might be read, she still used but the one hand, and the document covered her breast. Still reading, as though in doubt of its meaning, her face growing crimson, her right hand, which had been resting upon Captain Jinks' head, travelled noiselessly under the document to the opening of her bodice, whence she drew forth the two scraps of paper inscribed with short-hand which she had thrust there when Carolyn had entered. Down again, without so much as a flutter of the thick document, her right hand travelled to the dog's mouth, pressing quickly the brown scraps between his teeth. Then her hand closed over his mouth and one of her fingers pressed against his jaws, and she felt the dog's teeth grinding savagely into the paper. Still her left hand held the document, her eyes were on its contents, as redder and redder grew her face. She peered down among the written lines as though better to understand them. Suddenly she spoke a word which to the officer sounded like an exclamation of surprise at their import, "Trois!"

But Captain Jinks, linguist, soldier, and gentleman, understood, and down into his little stomach went the masticated fragments of the brown paper. He made no noise, no protest, against so unusual a diet.

"Carolyn, will you give Captain Jinks a chocolate cream and one of his digestive tablets?" Still Margaret kept her right hand at her side, her eyes on the document. Like one in a dream, Carolyn, who had seen the whole performance, obeyed her, and Captain Jinks sprang into a more comfortable position and delightedly devoured both the cream and the tablet.

Even yet, so little time had passed that it was scarcely worth noting. Margaret's right hand now took hold of the other side of the document, while her face gathered still more of carmine hue.

Now the man at the door spoke.

"The dog comes too, madam!" he said.

"Very well!" she answered in a muffled voice which seemed to control some great emotion.

Then she thrust the document before Carolyn's eyes, and Carolyn read there a warrant for the arrest of Margaret Allison for the murder of Frances Fennimore Farrington.

CHAPTER XX

A PRISONER AT THE TOMBS.

When she was taken before a police-court magistrate, Margaret Allison, accused of the murder of Frances Fennimore Farrington, waived her right to an immediate examination, and to all questions put to her answered merely "I have nothing to say."

She was then committed to the Tombs to await trial, and with her went Captain Jinks, who, the District Attorney declared, was to be one of the most important witnesses for the prosecution, and must be kept where the authorities could look after him and produce him at the required time.

The arrest was made late in the afternoon, and until that time no mention had been made in any of the papers of the finding of the body of Frances Farrington by the oysterman the night before. However, within an hour after Margaret's incarceration, the streets were thronged with newsboys selling, and people buying, the "extras" containing the sensational story which had been withheld from the public for a day through what was doubtless the smartest bit of diplomacy ever engineered by the District Attorney's office.

Margaret, sitting now in the common room where the female prisoners at the Tombs spent their time when not in their

cells, was handed a copy of one of the extras by a fellow prisoner, and she looked at the first page, expecting to see there an account of her own arrest. What she saw —great headlines announcing the finding of the body, with a large photograph of it, arrayed in the striped gown in which the body was clothed when found—caused an involuntary gasp to escape from her lips, and for an instant she turned faint, nearly falling from her chair. Then she showed almost superhuman strength in collecting herself. A shadow of irresolution passed over her face, then left it, as she stood up, the paper in her hand, and seemed to be about to speak to one of her companions. Then her expression became tense, her lips took on a determined firmness, and she sat down again and calmly read what the paper had to say.

She partook of the regular prison supper, went to her cell, and spent the night on the lower hard narrow bunk. In the morning she took advantage of the shower-bath allowed such prisoners as were addicted to cleanliness and ate again the prison meal.

As for Captain Jinks, he fared more sumptuously than his lady, and, although a few restrictions were placed upon his liberty, he really had not great cause for complaint. Three times during the day he was taken to the kitchen under the care of his adored and adoring friend, Jim Riley, and fed far beyond what was good for his digestion and the sleekness of his coat. During the first few days of his imprisonment his conscience struggled violently against the superabundance of chocolate creams which were given him by the deputy warden, in whose office he spent most of his time. The deputy warden kept a large bag of them on the table, and at such a height that the dog had but to stand on his hind legs, draw the bag toward him with his paw, and push his nose into it to get two or three candies at a time. The deputy warden delighted in this particular trick. He was an old friend of Captain Jinks, their acquaintance extending over a period of four years.

Sometimes the deputy warden would take Captain Jinks out into the hard paved court, where men in striped clothes were at work, and would exercise him up and down, and then he would walk over to the entrance of that part of the prison occupied by the female prisoners. He would tap gently on the door or window, and a grey-haired, middle-aged woman would come to the door, to whom the deputy warden would say—

"Here, for God's sake, let her see him for a little while, and I'll have Jim Riley come and get him in fifteen minutes or so."

The middle-aged woman was Mrs. Sullivan, matron of the female department, and the room into which Captain Jinks would be ushered was the one in which the prisoners were allowed to see visitors for a short time every day during visiting hours. Mrs. Sullivan would disappear along the passage-way and instantly appear with Captain Jinks' lady. He would cover her with embraces and sit beside her chair, and whatever he thought of his or her strange quarters, he kept his own counsel, as did also his lady. It could not be said that Captain Jinks was unhappy. Never distinguished prisoner of state was treated with more consideration than he. For close companions he had his lady, though he saw less of her than he desired, the deputy warden, Jim Riley, and Mrs. Sullivan, who was also an old friend. Many a time when Margaret had visited the Tombs she had stopped for a half-hour's chat with the matron. Many a refreshing cup of tea had been served to her by Mrs. Sullivan, and Captain Jinks had danced innumerable times in the matron's presence and received reward in small cakes.

Now, in the remarkable circumstances that had made Margaret a prisoner awaiting trial for homicide, Mrs. Sullivan, quite bewildered, yet full of faith that Margaret was shielding someone who was the real criminal, did not forget the old days, and, against the rules of the prison, she had tried to induce Margaret to accept a soft feather pillow in her cell in place of the straw one furnished to the prisoners. Margaret had refused it, and the only advantage she took of Mrs. Sullivan's kindness was to beg her to get Captain Jinks surreptitiously to her cell at night. Mrs. Sullivan did this with the connivance of the deputy warden and Jim Riley, and never a whine, never a bark nor a snore did Captain Jinks make during the night, as he lay on the upper bunk, above the lower one where slept his lady.

At the Tombs Margaret's first visitor was Carolyn, who, the morning after the arrest, had given over her school to a substitute in order that she might devote her whole time to Margaret.

The meeting of the two friends on the first morning at the Tombs was a strange one. For several minutes Carolyn said nothing, but stood looking into Margaret's face. Finally she said—

"What does it mean, Margaret?"

"It seems to mean what you see, dear. That I am in prison, accused of murder."

"Speak to me, Margaret. Tell me!"

"Speak to you, tell you!" repeated Margaret. "You don't mean that you ask me to deny the charge, do you, Carolyn?"

"How dare you, Margaret!" cried Carolyn, grabbing her by the shoulders. "You could not think I would wish you to deny it. I ask you to tell me whom you are shielding?"

"Then, Carolyn, since denial is not necessary, I need say nothing to you except that you are not to be troubled, and that you must live by faith."

A few days after Carolyn, again with Margaret, said—

"Margaret, you know who killed her; you are letting the criminal escape while you sit here."

"I told you I could not talk to you about it," returned Margaret.

"If you won't talk, then I will. I believe Sam Blackmore is in some way involved, and it is my intention to get him back to this country."

"You can't do that, Carolyn, except by breaking your promise to me to keep the secret of my engagement, and I hold you to that promise."

"Not now!" exclaimed Carolyn, with white lips and staring eyes. "Under these circumstances I am released from that promise."

"Now more than ever," returned Margaret calmly, "I forbid you to mention even my acquaintance with him. I forbid it, Carolyn!"

"Then send for him, Margaret!"

"That is what I shall do. I wish to get a cablegram to him, but I do not believe you can send it for me. Are not your movements watched?"

"Yes, Margaret. I don't suppose I do anything that is not known to the District Attorney's office. Already I am subpœnaed as a witness for the prosecution," and Carolyn buried her face in her hands.

"There is but one other person I can trust. Carolyn, communicate with the Little Dominie and send him here. Tell him not to come as if to see me, but as a mere visitor interested in prison work, and to make an opportunity to talk with me as though by accident. I can manage it through him."

"Certainly, I can do that," said Carolyn. "When you give me work to do, I can do it. Faith without work is dead!" She smiled wanly.

One day the Little Dominie walked away from the Tombs, carrying away a number of words which Margaret had repeated to him several times until he had learned them by heart. Two days later he went to a distant city, and from the cable office there sent a message through the waters. He had not the slightest idea of what the words meant, to whom they went, or what could be the result of their going. He had but obeyed the instructions of the prisoner at the Tombs. When he had left her with the list of words which he knew was a cablegram in cipher he had merely said—

"Anything else?"

"Yes, get into the habit of coming occasionally as a visitor here. Open any message that comes to you in reply to this, learn the words by heart, and repeat them to me. Rise, Sir Knight! Henceforth thou art Mercury!" and Margaret gave him a smiling adieu.

So the days went on and Margaret and Captain Jinks had been in the Tombs two weeks. The great trial was expected to open within the coming fortnight, the District Attorney having announced that in her own case, at least, Miss Allison should be given no cause to make complaint of the "Law's Delays." He also announced that the case was almost in perfect readiness when he had made his final coup of arresting her, so that there was little to do now except to wait for the ending of a case now on the calendar.

Meanwhile the newspapers published columns of matter purporting to give an account of Margaret Allison's daily life at the Tombs. These stories were illustrated with pictures depicting her in every possible position, though the favorite one was that of a melancholy, handsome woman looking between the bars of a cell, or sitting disconsolately upon the edge of a bunk with her head hitting the bunk above.

The works of noted criminologists were searched for descriptions of the prevailing shapes in the heads of degenerates and murderers, and skilful artists at newspaper offices always somehow managed so to distort her features that signs of degeneracy and tendency to crime should be conspicuous. Photographs of her, purchased at enormous prices from photographers who had no right to sell them, were so worked over in the art rooms that her old acquaintances were surprised that they had never before noted the peculiar bumps and depressions in her head, the protrusions in her neck, and the lines in her face that bespoke a leaning toward bloodshed.

Daily on one pretext or another reporters tried to get to her, representing themselves as lawyers, doctors, parsons who would pray for her soul, and old friends who had come to help her in her need; but under every disguise she scented their mission, and refused to go into the visitors' room. One newspaper managed to get desultory reports of her daily doings by having its reporter bribe another prisoner to take notes of her, the reporter going every day to see the other prisoner, representing himself as a cousin from the west. In this way it became known that Margaret spent much of her time with a large paper pad in her lap, with her pencil flying rapidly, and it was assumed that she was busy writing her life. Also, through the agency of the woman prisoner who acted as deputy news-gatherer in the female ward, it became known that Margaret, although apparently well supplied with money, was not having any special meals served by the prison caterer or anything sent in front outside; that she ate uncomplainingly every morning the prison breakfast of bread and coffee; that at dinner she partook of the regulation stew, and at supper seemed to relish the bread and jam; that she wore always the dark blue camel's-hair dress which she had on when arrested; and that her hair was always beautifully and becomingly dressed, notwithstanding the fact that she had no looking-glass. Of course, the fact that the matron had so far forgotten her duty as to offer the surreptitious loan of a small mirror was not given out, for the reason that only Margaret and Mrs. Sullivan knew the secret; nor was there made public any news of Captain Jinks, except that he seemed to live in the deputy warden's office, where he occasionally was patted by a reporter, though refusing always to perform a solitary trick or be interviewed by the Press.

To the young woman who daily spied upon her Margaret was a bit talkative at time, offering to help her over a difficult part of crochet work, and speaking to her in her native Italian tongue, though the girl knew English. To her oft-reiterated question, "Did you kill that writing woman?" Margaret answered with a wan smile, "What do you think about it yourself?" and when the Italian girl would reply, "Well, you can't tell what anybody would do till they're tempted," Margaret would return quietly, "That is what I say, too, and what I have always said. I myself never knew what I could do till I was tempted." This reply, given to the newspaper reporter, was published as "Margaret Allison's Confession of Guilt to a Fellow Prisoner in the Tombs." By a large number of newspapers in the United States this young woman, who had hitherto borne an unblemished reputation, was immediately tried, found guilty, and sentenced, in accordance with the custom of the land where the liberty of the Press has degenerated into ribald licence.

'All I ask of the authorities," Margaret remarked one day to the matron, "is a speedy trial and quick justice, and as the District Attorney is kind enough to promise

me that, I am perfectly content."

"And yet you haven't got so much as a lawyer to look after you," groaned Mrs. Sullivan.

"I don't need one. I know my own case, and I know the law of this State so thoroughly that I can be my own attorney better than anybody else could possibly be. Millions for tribute, if necessary, but not one penny for defence, as my patriotic forefathers used to say, Mrs. Sullivan."

Margaret had hoped to bring a smile to Mrs. Sullivan's face, but instead the good Irishwoman wiped her eyes with the hem of her gingham apron.

Almost daily Margaret refused offers of counsel. Some of them were high priced, some low, while others declared themselves so convinced of her innocence that they offered to take up her defence merely for the happiness it would bring them to secure her acquittal; and to such she would answer, "You might not bring about my acquittal. I have never said I was innocent."

She had given no sign as to what plea she would make in court. Not only before, but since her incarceration in the Tombs, she had answered all questions with "I have nothing to say."

Finally, when she had allowed it to be well understood that she had no intention of employing counsel of any sort, a young lawyer, Harrison Wainright, was appointed by the court to look after her interests, though she insisted that this was done against her wishes and over her protest. She also announced that since the court had taken what she felt was an unwarranted liberty, she must refuse to consult with Mr. Wainright. She would give him no information whatever; she would neither ask nor take his advice; and she declared that when the trial was opened she intended to take advantage of her right to make her own defence, make such cross-examination of witnesses as she should deem necessary, and that she would also go on the witness-stand herself. She was assured that none of these rights would be denied her, but that nevertheless the court would appoint Mr. Wainright to see that nothing was neglected in the way of securing her every right as a citizen of the state, and so that there might be no miscarriage of justice because of any ignorance on her part concerning the law.

At the beginning of the third week of her imprisonment Mr. Wainright began making daily visits to her, pleading that she take him into her confidence. He was a young man, not yet thirty, and as he talked with her Margaret felt sure that he was destined to become a lawyer of repute in New York. She felt, too, an uncontrollable liking for him personally as well as an admiration for his perservering pertinacity in visiting her against her will; and once she was startled out of her wonted composure when the young attorney jumped suddenly from his chair and, giving a thunderous pound on a table, cried out—

"Mad woman! Whom are you shielding? Have you a lover?"

"If I am shielding some one, how could I continue the shielding if I told you?" was her calm reply.

Carolyn continued to visit Margaret every day, bringing her such clothes as she needed. Once Margaret said to her, "Carolyn, I charge you to be good to Annette and comfort her. Tell her that although she must not come to see me, I sent her word that she is not to be unhappy and that everything will come out all right." Conscientiously Carolyn delivered the message, and then went out on her own account and hired a woman detective, installing her in the Hotel Illington as chambermaid, with instructions to watch Annette and Helen Morton, the actress. Then Carolyn called on Harrison Wainright.

Meanwhile two interesting bits of information were given by the newspapers. The one was that Miss Allison's latest comedy, in which Helen Morton played the leading part, had been taken off the stage by the management because of the prejudice of the public against the author, and that had this not been done in time, it would surely have been hissed off, English fashion. Just around the corner the great play by Frances Fennimore Farrington was drawing crowded houses, and it looked as though the ill-fated author's misfortune was proving to be the theatrical manager's fortune.

The other piece of news was the information that Mr. James Lloyd, the editor of the "Arlington Magazine," had been left with an unfinished serial on his hands by Frances Fennimore Farrington. He confessed to having been so taken by the wonderful plot when the first half of the story was submitted to him that, contrary to his custom, he had begun to publish before the whole of the manuscript was in his hands.

Inquiry among the many other editors for which Miss Farrington had written developed the assurance that she had finished up all the other work for which she had contracted, so that the Arlington serial now running and which was attracting wide attention, was the only unfinished thing she had left behind her.

When the District Attorney learned this, he smiled broadly at one of his assistants, remarking, "The plot thickens—that is to say, it clears up!" Then he walked over to the window, murmuring, "Oh, the game, the game!"

CHAPTER XXI

FROM THE LAND OF TO-MORROW

Sam Blackmore, several miles from the mining camp in the direction of Guadalupe, stood upon a jut of rock, sweeping the horizon with his field-glasses. He was looking for signs of Henderson, due from the port of Payta, the nearest point whence cablegrams could be dispatched or received. From Payta on to the mining camp they took their chances with such vessels as might touch at Guadalupe, with a land journey of indefinite length of time on to the camp. Henderson had been instructed to wait in Payta in order to receive personally a cablegram, which Sam felt must surely be there, for Margaret had been in the habit of sending one each week in a particular cipher which only she and her lover understood.

When Henderson set out for Payta, it had been expected that he would find a cablegram awaiting him. Still, Sam reasoned, this could not have been the case, for now Henderson was four days late.

Mail was irregular, according as it caught fast or slow ships after leaving Colon, so Sam depended upon the cable for weekly

news of his fiancée. He was, in the main, a man of infinite patience. He could work and plod on toward a promised goal, or even a possible one, heeding no obstacles at right or left, never looking backward, and pressing forward always with his nose to the very grindstone, if need be. He bore with great quietude and calmness whatever necessary delays came in his way. With needless waiting, however, he had no patience, and it was to avoid all such delays, both in his business and in the matter of hearing from Margaret, that he kept always stationed at Payta a representative of the mining company to see to the quick dispatch of all messages, sending down to the representative each week somebody from the camp to hasten things.

This time the messenger had been John Henderson, as one whom he could trust, and to whom he confided his anxiety about Margaret from whom he had not heard in two weeks. There was a troubled look in Sam's eyes as he laid down his field-glasses. Gloomily and forebodingly he passed his hand over his brow, and stepping back gingerly from the dangerous projection where he had stationed himself for what he thought would be a better view of anything approaching camp, he came face to face with Henderson himself, who had arrived at the camp during Blackmore's absence, and had then set out to search for him.

Blackmore stretched forth his hand. "In Heaven's name give it to me, Henderson!" he said, and Henderson held out an envelope.

Tearing it open with one hand and dragging from his pocket a small booklet with the other, he sat down to translate the message, which was addressed to "Barrier, Payta." Swiftly his fingers flew through the leaves of his code-book. It was a long message. Henderson knew that, by the time it took Sam to decipher it. Sam's face had grown tense, and his eyes were staring when finally he looked up at Henderson.

"My God, Henderson! When does the next fast ship leave Payta for Panama?" he asked.

"A week from to-day," returned Henderson.

"Will it connect all right with the mail packet boat from Colon?"

"Yes, it must, even if they have to wait half a day for it," said Henderson; "but I thought we had arranged to take the 'Atrata.'"

"Can't wait. We must both of us go at once. Read that!" and writing out the message in proper form, Sam thrust a paper toward Henderson, who read it, smoothed it out, re-read it, and said nothing.

"What can she mean?" How is it possible, Henderson?" asked Sam finally.

"How it's possible is more than I know," returned Henderson. "What she means to do is easy to see. You always knew you were not engaged to marry a bread-and-butter miss, didn't you? Heavens! The strength of that girl! I'd pit her against the Government itself!"

"But do you realize that she's actually at this minute in the Tombs, and that the trial will have begun before we can arrive?" asked Sam, laying a trembling hand on Henderson's shoulder.

"Yes, but she has plenty of money for the comforts she needs, and friends enough if she wants to speak."

"But she won't speak—you know that, Henderson," said Sam with shaking voice, "and as for the comforts, she won't take them, I'll warrant you! And to think that twice I've torn my heart in shreds and patches to leave her in New York because I wouldn't bring her down here away from all the comforts of civilization! And now I expect she's eating prison fare!"

"Well, Sam, Margaret's a magnificently healthy woman, and she won't break down either mentally, physically, or morally, that's sure! And as for speaking, why we've both got tongues, and we can do some tall speaking when we get there. Come, man, we'd better prepare to start for Payta in the morning. It's only a week earlier than you intended anyway."

"Yes," replied Sam, "the quickest way to send word to her is for us to get to Payta and cable to the Dominie."

They were on their way to the camp now, and were met by Felipe and his sleek and happy white mule.

"We're off a week earlier than we intended, Felipe," said Sam calmly, as though he only stated a sudden notion in a change of plans. "Get out the satchels and let me see what's worth carrying away."

"Señor go manaña?" asked Felipe in tearful voice.

"Manaña this time as sure as your born, Felipe!"

"It's to be calm, and wait for manaña, when your blood is boiling and your heart is thumping like thunder," observed Sam, with a sorry grin to Henderson, as they paced up and down smoking before the hut where Felipe was making himself busy for the final departure of his beloved Señor. It was ten minutes ere either of the men spoke again. Sam threw away his cigar, bared his head, and clutched Henderson's sleeve.

"She says the woman's body was found in the North River, Henderson," he burst out. "How can it be possible?"

"Don't ask me!" replied Henderson. "Long ago I learned that there were more strange things that could take place in this supposedly prosy old world than we in our small philosophy ever dreamt of. There's nothing to do but wait."

"Yes, wait," replied Sam, "but it's mighty hard. The hardest task I ever set myself yet."

And so they waited. For in the Land of To-morrow one learns to wait.

CHAPTER XXII

THE CASE OF "THE PEOPLE."

Just five weeks after her arrest the trial of Margaret Allison for the murder of Frances Fennimore Farrington was begun in Part I of the Criminal Branch of the Supreme Court. Certainly, as the District Attorney had remarked, she could have no cause for complaint concerning the "Law's delays," to which she had so often bitterly referred in her writings, when it came to the matter of the speedy trial which she had demanded for herself.

The District Attorney did not give over this particular case to any of his assistants. He had decided to conduct it in per-

son, with the help of two of his most promising underlings. As Margaret entered the court-room and glanced into the railed-off enclosure where sat the attorneys for "the People," the first sensation of which she was conscious was one of regret that the faces of these two young men, whom she had often seen conducting the case of the prosecution in other trials, appeared to be growing daily more set and hard and like unto that of their chief. She saw sarcasm, cynicism, and suspicion stamped upon them, as well as the beginnings of that sneer which could never wear off.

Her face appeared just the slightest bit drawn, and the sadness of her eyes seemed to have deepened during her imprisonment; but she looked a woman whose nerves and emotions were well under control as she walked along the aisle and took her seat at the head of the counsel-table, with Harrison Wainwright at her left. She wore a simple little toque hat with some pink moss-rosebuds artistically arranged at the side. Her dress, whatever it might be, was entirely hidden by a smart, black silk coat which fell to her feet and her coat collar was ornamented with quaint designs of velvet, fitting closely about her neck.

For an instant her gaze swept in front of her and at the sides, with an almost imperceptible pause over the long tables of newspaper reporters, and at the enclosure slightly ahead and to her left, where sat the special writers, who were engaged at enormous space rates to write their "impressions" of what promised to be the greatest murder trial New York had ever known. In this enclosure there were several women with whom she was personally acquainted. Some of them had been her guests at receptions and tea-parties, as well as having been her interviewers during the past few years since her wonderfully successful career as novelist and playwright had made her a personality of great interest to newspaper readers.

Her eyes wandered on to the Judge, a large man of kindly eyes under beetling brows, a judge upon whom she had always looked as a man of mercy, as well as one of extraordinary understanding. She had never met him personally, but she had heard from many sources that he was an admirer of her work, and that he had most particularly commended her various sketches of the courts for their lifelikeness, that he had, indeed, more than once quoted some of her legal bons mots with a keen enjoyment of their humour.

From studying his face, her eyes rose to the painting directly over his head, that of "Justice," which she had always designated as "The Lady of the Scales." On the left of this picture she noted the panel of "The Three Fates," and on its right, that of the figures representing Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality.

She was recalled from her gaze-wandering by a touch on the arm from Harrison Wainright. It had been arranged between them that in the first instance she was to make her own plea, though she had not told him what it would be. He was to choose the jury according to his own whims, unless she should otherwise direct concerning some particular talesman; he might cross-examine in cases where she did not forbid him to do so, and he might, if he desired, make the opening address to the jury when the case of The People should be complete. As for witnesses in her own behalf, she had declared that none were needed except herself, and so had refused to give him names of any he might call, but she had consented to his request that he be allowed to put a doctor on the stand, a friend of his own who had volunteered, free of charge, to come to his assistance in what he considered a very important medical matter. What that important matter was she did not ask him.

At Wainright's touch she knew she must now listen to the moving of the case of The People of the State of New York against Margaret Allison, who was accused of having, on the morning of February 15th, lured from a cab at Pier 48 one Frances Fennimore Farrington to Pier 56½, suddenly taking her unawares, and drowning her by pushing her from the edge of the quay into the water. She rose and stood before the court when the Clerk said, "Margaret Allison, you have been indicted for murder in the first degree of one Frances Fennimore Farrington. Do you demand a trial? Are you guilty or not guilty?"

In a clear voice she answered—

"NOT GUILTY!"

For just an instant she fixed her eyes on those of the District Attorney, then she sat down, and the work of choosing the jury began. During the first two hours of the examination of talesmen several challenges on each side were used up in the matter of the prospective jurymen's attitude toward dogs. A dozen talesmen, by their answers to the remarkable questions put to them, gladly suffered themselves to appear as fools in almost every respect, in accordance with the requirements of the strict impartiality demanded by our laws, thus showing themselves qualified to sit in judgment on a most important case. Then would come the question "Are you fond of dogs?" If the answer was in the affirmative, the District Attorney challenged in behalf of The People, on the ground that the juryman would not be able to render an unprejudiced verdict in a case where a dog must be brought in as a witness and might appeal to his sympathies. If the answer was in the negative. Harrison Wainright objected to and challenged the non-dog lover as one who would surely be prejudiced against his client. Finally, at the beginning of the afternoon session, the Court interposed, forbidding that any talesman should be questioned on the subject of his feelings toward the canine race. Then the task of filling the jury-box proceeded apace, and at five o'clock, when Court adjourned, nine of the seats were filled.

The next morning when the talesman who should, if chosen, make the tenth juror went on the stand for examination, repeating most carefully his name, Martin Ellsworth Cummings, it was noticed that the defendant's interest seemed suddenly to awaken, as well it might. This man she did not know, and he told the truth when he said that he was not an acquaintance of the prisoner nor of her counsel, had never had business relations with her, and knew

neither the District Attorney nor anybody in his office.

"Mr. Cummings," said the District Attorney, "are you conscientiously opposed to capital punishment, or have you any religious scruples which would interfere with your rendering a verdict of murder in the first degree?"

Margaret looked in curious manner at the talesman. This Martin Ellsworth Cummings, who had never before seen her or spoken to her, had written her many letters telling her of his admiration of her work; and, having read some of her little court stories and discovering her to be an opponent of capital punishment, had commended her attitude, assuring her that his heart was with her. Indeed, it was he who had first suggested to her that she was capable of writing a great book in the form of a novel that might help to wipe away the stain of blood shed coolly by the state in punishment for that shed hotly by the murderer.

He had sat there waiting for this important question by the District Attorney, then quickly answered, "I have not!"

Instantly she knew what it meant. This man was determined to be on the jury that should try her for her life, in order that he might bring about a disagreement in case the other eleven should adjudge her guilty.

The questioning of Mr. Cummings went on. Neither Wainright nor the District Attorney could find any fault in him. Margaret heard him sworn, and saw him take the tenth chair in a box to her right.

The two additional jurors were quickly chosen. One was a merchant, the other a manufacturer. In spite of their asseverations to the contrary, the twelve made an intelligent, fair-minded, kindly-looking set of men. They represented many callings, but none were publishers or editors or playwrights. Gentlemen who belonged to these professions were excused by consent of both sides for fear of prejudice of mind either for or against the defendant.

The jury chosen, the court adjourned for luncheon, and at two o'clock the District Attorney rose preparatory to opening the case for "The People." Harrison Wainright was all attention, note book and pencil in hand, his earnest young face alight and eager. For a lawyer whose client refused to give him any information about her case he appeared particularly buoyant and confident. Now, at least, he knew that she pleaded "not guilty." He had that to go on, and he also felt that he had some other things to "go on" which he had no notion of explaining, even to her. This was his first big case—what matter that it came through being appointed by the court and that the fee to be paid by the state was not enormous? Here was his first chance to distinguish himself, and he determined that, through a watchfulness of the District Attorney's tactics, he would try to make that gentleman sit up. He almost forgot his anger against Margaret, in his gratitude that at the last minute she had consented to allow him to cross-examine instead of doing it herself.

As for the defendant, she sat at her table with eyes and cheeks aglow with such excitement as one might exhibit at the playhouse waiting for the curtain to rise on a performance which promised to be more than ordinarily interesting. She sat back in her chair, and then, as though moved by a sudden thought for the comfort of those behind her, and desirous that they might see to the best possible advantage, she quietly pulled the pins from her small hat and placed it in front of her, straightened her shoulders back again, and lifted her face.

"May it please your Honour and Gentlemen of the Jury," began the District Attorney, bowing first in front to the Judge and then to his right, where sat the Twelve. "This is a case builded entirely upon Circumstantial Evidence. I say to you in the very beginning that no person, in so far as is known, saw the defendant kill the deceased!"

Here Margaret's hand passed unsteadily over her eyes, then she looked calmly ahead.

"I say it is a case of Circumstantial Evidence. I say it is a chain with link after link fitting perfectly into the preceding link, so that in the end I am able to hold up before your eyes a perfect chain without one link, or so much as a part of a link, missing.

"Although this case has been brought to trial in a remarkably short time after the arrest of this defendant, think not, Gentlemen of the Jury, that the cause of The People has been prepared in that short time. Within a few days after the suspicious disappearance of Frances Fennimore Farrington, and long before it was known that she was truly dead, certain remarkable circumstances were brought to my attention which made me feel sure that this defendant was concerned in her disappearance, and I began at once to investigate and get the links of my chain together.

"I am prepared to bring before you a history of the whole life of this defendant since she was a schoolgirl. I am prepared to show you what sort of a child she was; what kind of student at the boarding school which she attended; what were her opinions at that time; what were her very earliest writings. I am prepared to show you that from her earliest years she chose for her associates the base, the dishonest, the criminal classes. I am prepared to show you that she took such persons for her intimates in preference to the good and the true; I am prepared to show you that the womanly woman and the manly man were almost entirely neglected by her when she had an opportunity to make friends with thieves, forgers, adulterers, and murderers. I will show you that in so far as we are able to discover the highest affection of which she is capable has been expended upon a poodle-dog, and that even at the solemn moment of her arrest her first thought was that he needed to be given a chocolate cream and a digestive tablet! Gentlemen of the Jury, let us suppose for one instant that she was innocent of the terrible charge against her, what character does such action show, such utter disregard of the seriousness of the crime which had been imputed to her! Why, Gentlemen of the Jury, even this poodle-dog of hers is a criminal—trained in the science of pocket-picking, by which she has derived entertainment and I will not say profit!"

Harrison Wainright jumped to his feet. "Your Honour, I object to this style of oratory—I demand——"

The defendent touched him on the shoulder and whispered to him, whereupon the young lawyer rose again, saying calmly—

"Your Honour, I will withdraw the objection. Let the learned District Attorney go on. 'The play's the thing!' "

The District Attorney turned blandly and curtsied to Counsel for Defence, and then proceeded.

"I shall prove to you, Gentlemen of the Jury, by more than one witness, that this defendant, envious of the name and the success which her rival had attained in this city and this country, gnashed her teeth in jealousy against her. I shall prove to you that while all the city and all the country sang the praises of the gifted woman who met her death so tragically and so horribly only one voice was silent, and that voice was the voice of this defendant. While others spoke of the genius of this woman from a foreign land who came to make her home among us, this defendant was never known to say anything of good or encouragement, greeting always the name of Frances Fennimore Farrington with a sardonic sneer

"And why, Gentlemen of the Jury? Let me tell you why. Less than two years ago this defendant was considered the leading humourous writer in the city of New York. Her articles, her stories, her books, her plays, were much sought after, and she enjoyed an immense income from her work. In her own particular line of work she was supposed to stand alone, and in her own field she recognized no rivals. It is not for me to say, Gentlemen of the Jury, that much of her success was on account of the name she had won, rather than on account of the merit of all her work! Let that pass—but, as I said, she stood alone, removed, as she supposed, from competition.

"But competition came. It came from over the sea, from that motherland of our American literature, England. Such wonderful stories of comedy appeared, signed by another name than that of Margaret Allison, as made this defendant start with amazement, then tremble with fury. These stories from the pen of the gifted Englishwoman were so far above those with which the public had been supplied that immediately the work of this defendant became

'As moonlight unto sunlight
And as water unto wine!'

"It was then that the income of this defendant began to decrease. It was then that she began to plan the awful details for the disappearance of her rival. And such plans as she made, Gentlemen of the Jury, I shall unfold to you by the cloud of witnesses I shall bring against her. With this woman from another land, this genius who had supplanted her, out of the way, she believed that she would again gain her old place and her former hold upon the public. How she planned this, and how she accomplished this, I shall prove to you upon the testimony of reliable witnesses. And while I am proving the crime of murder against her, I shall of necessity prove other crimes against her which in themselves would send her to prison for a term of years——"

"I object, your Honour!" shouted Harrison Wainright. "This defendant is on trial for one offence which the District Attorney has not proven, and yet he now accuses her of other crimes——"

Again the eager young counsel was interrupted by his client, and once again, as before, he withdrew his objection, and begged his Honour to "let the play proceed."

"Gentlemen of the Jury," went on the District Attorney, "I will not prolong this address, except to remind you that this crime is all the more atrocious because of the helpless character of its victim, in that she was a stranger in a strange land, come here to seek our hospitality, while offering us in return the great gifts which the gods had bestowed upon her. What she was, we know not. Whether by birth she was a princess or a peasant, she was entitled to the protection of the law. Friendless she appeared to be in many respects. An air of mystery surrounded her life. She had few visitors, she appeared to know few people, and her great desire seemed to be to keep to herself. Was she a woman of noble birth seeking happiness in another land and under a name that was not hers? Ah, Gentlemen, who shall say——"

Here the learned District Attorney broke down. The tears were rolling down his cheeks, and he drew forth a pocket-handkerchief to wipe his glasses. Then he went on:—

"Gentlemen of the Jury, we do not know all that we might wish, although, indeed, this defendant at the bar might, I am convinced, tell us something about the rank of her victim if she wished. But this I know, Gentlemen of the Jury, that the deceased Frances Fennimore Farrington came to us from another land and lived among us and died among us—died by the hand of this defendant, against whom, at the end of this trial, I shall ask you for a verdict of Murder in the First Degree."

The court-room was full of emotion that needed to vent itself in an outburst of something, and since cheers and applause were forbidden, the outburst took the form of tears. Only the Judge and Harrison Wainright sat unperturbed. As for the defendant herself, she seemed to be using her handkerchief quite freely, and there were times during the address when she put her head on the table and her shoulders slightly shook as though from half-suppressed sobs. The reporters round about her immediately sent messages to their various evening papers that she had shown deep feeling during the moving address of the District Attorney.

It was not yet four o'clock when the first witness for The People was called. He was the officer who made the arrest. After the preliminary questions, he was asked to describe what took place on the afternoon when he arrested the defendant.

"She was dancing with her dog in the middle of the room, and the other lady was playing the piano, when I handed her the warrant."

"What was her manner of receiving it?"

"She got very red in the face, sir, and when she had spent about a minute in reading it over she suddenly made an exclamation which sounded like 'Ah!' or 'What!' as near as I could make it out."

"Then what happened?"

"She looked up from the warrant and said to the other lady, who had been staring at her as if her eyes would come out, 'Carolyn, will you give Captain Jinks a chocolate cream, and one of his digestive tablets?' The other lady gave the things to the dog,

and then I said, 'The dog comes, too!' and she said 'Very well!' Then she showed the paper to her friend—just held it before her face—and as I saw she was going to speak again, I warned her that whatever she said would be used in evidence against her. Regardless of my warning, she said to the other lady, 'Now, Carolyn, you are not to be frightened, remember that, for I do assure you they will have something of a time proving it!'"

"She did not, you are sure, say to her friend that she did not commit the crime with which she was charged?" questioned the District Attorney, looking pointedly at the jury.

"No, sir; she only said they'd have something of a time proving it."

"Cross-examine!" said the District Attorney suddenly and triumphantly, turning to Counsel for Defence.

"Mr. Officer," said Harrison Wainright quietly, "did you say that this defendant turned pale with fright when you arrested her?"

"No, sir; I said she got very red in the face."

"With fright?" continued Wainright.

"Well, I suppose it was with fright; yes, sir."

"Have you arrested other persons on the charge of murder—quite a number of other persons?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did they all turn red in the face with fright?"

"No, sir."

"Did *any* of them turn red in the face with fright?"

"I remember one man that did, and he fell down in a fit and frothed at the mouth."

"Did this defendant fall down in a fit and froth at the mouth?"

"No, sir."

"She only got red in the face with fright?"

"Yes, sir."

Here Wainright paused and made a note on his paper pad; then continuing, he asked—

"Did the defendant make other remarks than those you have just told the District Attorney?"

"No, sir, that is——"

"Oh, she did make some other remark, did she?'

"Nothing of importance, sir!" and here the witness grew red and looked embarrassed.

"Please repeat that other remark, Mr. Officer!" commanded Wainright.

"You couldn't call it a remark, sir," said the officer, looking appealingly at the District Attorney.

At first Wainright had not the slightest idea that there had been any other remark. He had put his question almost aimlessly, but now he was convinced that something important was being held back, and that by the District Attorney's suggestion.

"Repeat that other *very important remark* that this defendant made when you arrested her!" shouted Wainright, springing lightly through the gate of the enclosure and hurling his fist upon the District Attorney's table with such force that he almost broke his knuckles.

The face of the witness grew scarlet as he tried to catch the eye of the District Attorney. That gentleman, however, had turned his back, and was twirling a pencil in his hand.

"Well, sir," admitted the witness, seeing no way out of it, "as I said, you couldn't call it a remark, because she sort of sang it. While she was putting on her hat the defendant said very low and sort of tune-like, 'How doth the busy little Bee!'"

Harrison Wainright was disappointed at the comparative unimportance of the "remark," but he smiled nevertheless. So did everybody, except the District Attorney, who had rather hoped that the jury would not be reminded of one of the defendant's most witty articles entitled "The Legal Beehive," in which he himself had figured as "The Busiest Bee of All."

CHAPTER XXIII

A CLOUD OF WITNESSES

The first witness for The People on the second day of the trial was Mrs. Herbert. Red and tearful, she puffed into the court-room from the witness-room, took the oath with great solemnity, insisted upon loudly kissing "the Book," then curtsying to the Judge, who she addressed as "your Lordship." This caused a slight titter among those who were assembled about her, which did not in the least disturb Mrs. Herbert.

Nor was she abashed, though she did turn slightly angry, at the stupidity of the Clerk, the stenographer, and the crier, when they showed much difficulty in understanding and pronouncing her name .

"It is 'Erbert, your Lordship!" she said firmly but respectfully.

"E-r-b-e-r-t!" sang out the stenographer.

"No, your Lordship, the gentleman is wrong in his spelling, hasking 'is pardon. Hit does not begin with he, but with haitch!"

"Spell it for him, madam," directed the Court.

"Haitch, hee, har, bee, hee, har, tee!" instructed Mrs. Herbert slowly; then, quickly, fluently, "'Erbert!"

The District Attorney turned his face to look out of a window, his assistants coughed, Harrison Wainright's eyes met those of his client in a veritable twinkle, and the Court gazed steadfastly at the gavel, which he pounded into the very face of the grinning stenographer, and the taking of testimony began.

Mrs. Herbert's testimony, punctuated with sighs and moans of her own and helpful hints from the District Attorney, was about what she had told in her sworn statement. After describing how the deceased came to apply for lodgings, how long she remained, how she worked, and other details, she was asked to describe how the deceased was dressed when she bade her good-bye. Most minutely she described the striped gown, the small black hat, and the tight-fitting black coat worn by Miss Farrington on the evening of her departure.

"Would you know that dress, that hat, and that coat if you saw them again?" asked the District Attorney.

"Yes, sir."

Here the District Attorney directed the opening of a large parcel, which was drawn from under a table. Carefully he took from it a skirt and bodice of black and white stripes, somewhat shrunken and faded and run together in colour, yet bearig witness to its original costliness of material and make. It was silk-lined, the dust-ruffle being considerably torn. He spread

this garment upon the table, then took out a long black tailor-made coat, also silk-lined, and hung it over a chair, topping it with a black velvet turban, trimmed with ostrich feathers, giving evidence of much water-soaking.

"Have you ever seen these clothes before, Mrs. Herbert?" he asked.

"Will you please let me have them in my lap, sir, to make a surety sure, sir?" asked the witness. They were handed to her. She took them close to her eyes and smoothed them reverently. As she did this, Harrison Wainright watched her as though fascinated, and across the face of the defendant there flitted a look of pained surprise tinged with amusement.

"Yes, sir!" finally answered the witness. "I take my solemn hoath these were 'er own dear ladyship's clothes."

"Ladyship!" repeated Harrison Wainright excitedly.

"The eminent young Counsel for Defence may have this witness when I have finished with her!" cried the District Attorney. "He may, indeed, have her as soon as she has done a little more identifying."

"I thank the distinguished District Attorney!" answered young Wainright, rising and bowing low.

Swiftly the District Attorney turned to another parcel and unfastened it. Its contents were soiled, water-soaked underwear.

"Did you ever see the underclothing worn by your former lodger, Mrs. Herbert? Perhaps, when she had it ready for the laundry?"

"Yes, sir."

"Was it like that which you hold in your hands?"

"Yes, sir," sobbed Mrs. Herbert, taking the garments very close to her eyes, and then rocking herself from side to side in the witness chair. "'Er ladyship's clothes was that fine and simple, and 'andmade, which showed 'er to belong to the quality, as I often says to 'Arriet!"

"You have told of a lady in brown who called on your lodger on the night that she left you, Mrs. Herbert. Could you identify the clothes she wore, do you think?"

"I wouldn't like to be sure of that, sir. It were night, sir, and she honly flashed into the door quicklike, but it were all in brown she were, sir, 'er face was turned from me, sir, but oh the noise 'er gown do make, sir!"

"Like this?" asked the District Attorney, springing tiger-like toward a heap of brown on the floor, and shaking a silk-lined gown in the astonished face of Mrs. Herbert.

"Yes, sir, certainly, sir, and I should say that were surely the dress, sir!"

"You say that the lady wore a heavy veil and also that her face was turned from you, so that you could not possibly identify her?"

"No, sir, I don't know hat hall what she looked like."

"Cross-examine!" said the District Attorney, turning to Harrison Wainright.

Wainright walked directly to the railing near the District Attorney, and holding up a large flat ruler in his hand, asked smilingly—

"Mrs. Herbert, do you see this lead-pencil I am holding?"

"Oh yes, sir!" answered Mrs. Herbert, beaming.

"That is all, Mrs. Herbert, thank you!" he answered, still smiling, and took his seat beside the defendant, then fixed his eyes steadily on the faces of the jurymen.

The oysterman who had found the body at Pier No. 56½, followed Mrs. Herbert upon the witness stand. His testimony was like unto his statement given weeks before to the District Attorney. Harrison Wainright made no cross-examination, having no questions to ask. In his ability to keep still when he had nothing to say, and to ask only such questions as had point and meaning, this young stripling of the law was beginning to show himself no insignificant adversary for even the District Attorney with his long years of wide experience. Already he had mastered the most important point in the art of cross-examination. Hampered as probably never before was a lawyer hampered, with a client who refused to help him, he sat beside her smiling and on the watch for every strong spot, as well as every weak one, in the enemy's armour.

The Coroner's physician was next put on the stand to describe thoroughly the examination he had made of the body and its results. He declared that he believed it to have been in the water about five weeks, and that the age of the woman was somewhere between twenty-five and thirty-one or thirty-two.

"Doctor," asked Wainright, in cross-examination, "do you know what was the age of Miss Farrington?"

"Not exactly."

"But about, I mean," pursued Wainright.

"I understood that she was between twenty-five and thirty."

"Who told you that?"

"I read it in the newspapers, and was also informed by the authorities."

"Did you also read in the newspapers the date of her disappearance?"

"I did."

"What did you say was the colour of the eyes of the body which you examined at the Morgue?"

"A light hazel."

"That is all," said Wainright.

Next came Hillary Angell, portrait painter to the ladies. Under the skilful handling of the District Attorney he told that he had long been acquainted with the defendant, and that he had, during the past year, always noted the jealousy which she showed whenever the name of Frances Farrington was mentioned. She alone, of all the literary set in which he mingled, had never a good word to say for the gifted Englishwoman. He went particularly into her demeanour at the garden party given at the country home of Mrs. Gregory-Mills, when Miss Allison had asked for a description of the personal attractions of the deceased, saying that, of course, in the matter of her literary gifts, she would not attempt to set herself up against the verdict of the great critics but that she particularly desired to know if Miss Farrington had long teeth and wore a visible invisible net. He also described how the defendant and Mr. James Lloyd had stood apart from the rest and had appeared to be in a heated controversy, which he believed had to do with certain attentions which Mr. Lloyd was paying to Miss Farrington, in a pro-

fessional, and, possibly, a personal way. Asked to identify Margaret Allison in the court-room, Mr. Angell pointed a well-manicured forefinger towards the defendant.

"Now, Mr. Angell," said the District Attorney with an air of great importance, "tell precisely what happened on February 7, when you went to call at the house where Miss Farrington lodged."

"On the afternoon of February 7th, between four and five o'clock, I decided to go to make a call upon Miss Farrington, and just as I got in front of the house where she lived I saw the front door open and Miss Margaret Allison come out of the house. She had her French poodle-dog with her. She seemed rather taken aback at meeting me. After saying good afternoon to her, I said, 'So you have made the acquaintance of Miss Farrington, finally, have you?' and she replied, 'I think I may say now that I know her!' Remembering all the questions Miss Allison had asked about the English lady, I said jestingly, 'And how do you like her looks?' She replied, with a rather sarcastic smile on her face, 'Really, Mr. Angell, I would rather not give an opinion on the subject of the lady's personal appearance. I might not do her justice.' At that she tried to hurry away, and as I had another question to ask her, I turned away from the house and walked a few steps, though she was walking so fast I had great difficulty in keeping up with her."

Here Mr. Angell paused, leaned back in the witness chair as though desirous of a rest. The District Attorney waited a few seconds, and then asked—

"What next did you say to Miss Allison?"

"I said to her, 'Did you see Miss Farrington this afternoon?' and she answered, 'Oh, yes!' Then I said, 'Then she is at home this afternoon, is she?' Miss Allison answered, 'Well, Mr. Angell, she was there when I was there!' "

The District Attorney indicating that he had no further questions to ask the witness, Counsel for Defence rose to cross-examine, and it was noted that Mr. Angell fidgeted a bit as he faced Harrison Wainright.

"Mr. Angell, did you go back, after you left Miss Allison that afternoon, and call on Miss Farrington?"

"I went back and inquired for her, yes."

"Did you see her?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"The woman who came to the door said Miss Farrington was out, and I knew Miss Allison could not have told the truth when she said she was in."

"Could not Miss Farrington have been in her apartments and have given instructions that she was out to other callers?"

"Yes; but that was not the case on that particular afternoon."

"How do you know that?"

"Because I went over in Washington Park and watched the house, and an hour afterwards I distinctly saw Miss Farrington go into the house."

"It must have been dark by that time. How is it you could be sure? Did you see her face distinctly?"

"I saw her back, and I knew it was she."

"You mean to say you knew her so well that you could identify her by her back?"

"I identified her by her clothes as well. She had a peculiar style of dress. Everything seemed to be striped."

"How did you know that?"

"Well," returned the witness, swallowing tremulously, "you see——"

"No, I don't see at all!" snapped Wainright. "I never said I saw! It was you who had been seeing!" Then suddenly——

"When did Miss Farrington last sit to you in your studio?"

"She did not come to my studio to sit," answered the witness lamely.

"Well, where was it you met so you could paint her portrait?"

The District Attorney here interposed. "I object, your Honour, that this witness is not being properly cross-examined. There was no mention of a portrait in my examination."

"Objection sustained," said the court, and the artist looked a bit more comfortable.

"Did you paint a portrait of Miss Farrington?" asked Wainright.

"Object!" shouted the District Attorney.

"Objection over-ruled!" nodded the court, and Harrison Wainright smiled grimly.

"Your Honour," said the District Attorney, "I do protest that Counsel for Defence is not cross-examining, but examining this witness."

"Your objection was over-ruled!" said the court, and down came the gavel, while the witness got a nod which meant that he was to answer the question.

"I was going to paint Miss Farrington's portrait, but she disappeared!" stammered Mr. Angell.

"Did you not tell a number of persons at a party given by a Mrs. Gregory-Mills that you were painting Miss Farrington's portrait?" asked Wainright. The unfortunate witness sat red and trembling, as the young lawyer strode toward him.

"Mr. Angell, answer my question!"

"I may have said that," admitted the witness. "You see, I expected to paint her and she disappeared."

"Did you ever see Miss Farrington, face to face, and ask her to allow you to paint her portrait?" continued Wainright mercilessly.

"I wrote to her and asked her."

"You did not ask her personally?"

"No."

"What did she say in reply to your request?"

"I should like to explain," began the poor young man, appealing to the court, but the court was not looking.

"I don't want to know what you would like to explain," cried Harrison Wainright. "Did Miss Farrington answer your letter at all?"

"No!" said the witness, now thoroughly broken in spirit.

"Did you ever in your life see Miss Farrington, except at the back, as you say, and did you ever speak to her in your life?"

"No."

"Finished!" laughed Wainright, and he turned triumphantly to his client, who wondered how he had become possessed of so much knowledge or suspicion.

Next came the cabman, Anthony Weir. He deposed to having gone to Washington Square, to driving to the White Star

pier, and to other particulars given in his statement some weeks before.

"Can you identify the lady in the brown dress who engaged you on that night, and whom you drove, together with the other lady, to the pier?" asked the District Attorney.

The cabby strode through the gate to the counsel table, and standing before Margaret Allison said, "This is the lady." The defendant merely looked him calmly in the eyes.

"Did you hear anything said in the cab while you were driving to the pier?" asked the District Attorney.

"Yes, sir."

"Repeat exactly what you heard."

"I heard someone say this: 'I suspect you!' "

"Did you hear anything else?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did you hear?"

"I heard the same voice say 'I tell you, you are too affectionate!' "

"Are you sure it was the same voice that spoke both these sentences?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did the other person answer?"

"I could not catch the reply, sir."

"Describe exactly the other lady who you say accompanied the lady in brown," said Wainright in cross-examination.

"I can't, sir," replied the cabby with a great air of candour. "You see, as I said, I dozed outside while I was waiting for 'em, and the first lady got inside before I fairly woke up, and then at the pier they both got out and walked some distance before I saw them."

"Describe the second lady that you saw at the pier."

"I couldn't see her face. She and the lady in brown were going on toward the Cunard pier."

"If you did not see a second lady get into your cab, or get out, how do you know you carried two ladies to the pier that night?"

"Because I heard the talking in the cab, and I heard two voices, though I could not distinguish what one voice said."

"Might there not have been a gentleman in the cab with the lady in brown?"

"I'm sure it wasn't a gentleman!" protested the cabby, and here it was observed that the defendant smiled.

"Had a little drink, perhaps, that evening, Mr. Weir?" asked Wainright good-naturedly.

"Well, sir, you really couldn't call it a drink!" replied the blushing witness.

"Not the kind of a drink that would make you see double or hear double, when you ought to see or hear single, or vice versa?"

"No, sir, I take my oath I hadn't had any o' that!" protested the cabman, evidently thinking he was being accused of partaking of some new and mysterious mixture, and with a laugh Wainright allowed him to go.

"Your Honour," said the District Attorney, "I ask that the defendant's dog be now produced, for purposes of identification by two witnesses I shall next put on the stand."

"Let the dog be brought in by the attendant who has had him in charge," said the Judge, and immediately Captain Jinks was led into the court-room, entering the enclosure reserved for the Prosecution and the court officers. He was taken past his lady, who gave him an encouraging pat to go on, and now he stood before the District Attorney, wagging his tail. The District Attorney took from the table drawer a stiff card, about the size of one of a playing pack. Through a little hole at the end of the card a string was passed, and with this string Jim Riley was directed to tie the card to Captain Jinks' collar. On the card in large printed letters was the legend "People's Exhibit A." While this label was being attached to him Captain Jinks showed the utmost composure. He was looking very happy and most beautifully groomed, and had an air of gallantry about him with his huge orange ribbons flying from his topknot. He cocked his head to one side in an inquiring manner at the District Attorney, as though to say, "You seem to be the stage manager. What 'turn' do you want me to do?"

A police officer was then called to the witness chair.

"I call your attention," said the District Attorney, "to 'People's Exhibit A,' and ask you if you ever saw it before."

At the indignity of being designated as an "it" Captain Jinks seemed to take no offence. He stood there, glancing first at the District Attorney, then at the witness.

"Yes, sir," answered the witness.

"Please tell where you saw this dog last, to the best of your knowledge."

"It was something over seven years ago, now," said the officer, "in Fourteenth Street. He was with his master, a certain Daniel Johnson, once a circus performer, who had taught the dog to steal purses from ladies' muffs. The dog nabbed a purse from the muff of this defendant, and carried it to his master. I was about to arrest the man when this defendant said she had given the dog the purse purposely, that Johnson was a friend of hers, and I was soft-hearted enough to let the man go. I found out that Johnson gave the dog to this defendant, and then lighted out to foreign parts, and I suppose that the defendant knows where he is."

The witness was dismissed, but Harrison Wainright interposed.

"Your Honour," said he, "if there is any connection between all that this witness has just told and the murder of Frances Fennimore Farrington I fail to see it. I have no cross-examination to make of this witness, for his testimony seems to me to be entirely irrelevant."

"I was merely establishing the identity of the dog and his antecedents before I call my next witness," said the District Attorney.

"Then," retorted Wainright, "I should like to inquire most respectfully of the court if it is the dog that is being tried for the murder, and if I have been appointed as counsel for this French poodle, in which case I should like to consult with my client."

"The eminent Counsel for Defence is too facetious," replied the District Attorney. "If he has no cross-examination to make I will call the next witness, who will enlighten him concerning the importance of the production of 'People's Exhibit A.' "

Wainright waved his hands in disgust, and the court crier announced—

"Phillip Edgerton!"

"What is your business, Mr. Edgerton?"

asked the District Attorney.

"A driver of cabs, in the employ of Starling and Company, Liverymen."

stand herself. She was assured that none

"Please state precisely what happened, and what experience you had in the early hours of the morning of February 15th last."

"I was returning to the stables after having driven a party home from the theatre, when in Broadway, near 72nd Street, a gentleman hailed me, and asked me to drive him to West Street, or near there, about opposite Pier 50, he said, or thereabout. I told him I couldn't, as I was not a regular street cabby, but belonged to a livery. He said he was in a hurry, couldn't find any other cab, and he would pay me well, so I decided to do it.

"In driving him I happened to turn into Greenwich Street before we got to West Street, and he put his head out of the cab and said, 'Wait a minute, it's not really the dock I want, but a street right near here, and the name of it commences with 'B,' Buthen Street, or some such name. Do you know it?'

"I immediately thought of Bethune Street, and asked him if he meant that, and he said yes, that was it, and I was to drive along carefully and slowly from Greenwich Street through Bethune Street, while he looked at the houses, because he had forgotten a number. Suddenly he jumped out of the cab, just as I saw a young woman and a dog standing in the entryway of a tenement house. She was a very handsomely dressed woman, it seemed to me, to be coming out of such a poor house as that. She came toward the gentleman very quickly, and he said. 'Why this isn't the place, anyway, is it?' She said, 'No, it's farther along, but I stopped in this entryway to prevent your making a noise.' The dog jumped into the cab, and then the gentleman said, as he was helping the lady in, 'Is it over?' and she whispered, 'Yes, she's dead.'

"When they were both in the cab I asked the gentleman where he wanted me to drive to. He seemed to consult with the lady a minute, and then he said, 'Oh, drive us about for a half-hour or so through some fairly decent streets, and then go to the Hotel Illington and stop there, and then, if you want to make a tenner, you can drive me back to the dock.'

"So I drove them about for three-quarters of an hour, and then I stopped at the 'Illington,' and the gentleman helped the lady out, patted the dog, and said 'Good-bye, old fellow,' jumped into the cab again, and I drove him to the foot of West 12th Street. I asked him which pier he wanted, and he said, 'Right here,' and he paid me the ten dollars he had promised, and I left him."

"What pier were you in front of when you left him?"

"I couldn't name any one particular pier, for one pier comes right after another. It was just between Pier 50 and Pier 51 I should say. Those are the Cunard Line and the West Indies ships. I noticed the word Jamaica over a pier directly in front of me."

"What did this gentleman look like?"

"Well, he was a tall man, smooth-faced, weighed probably about two hundred pounds, light complected, and looked about thirty or thereabouts. Rather a prosperous-looking man, too, well-set-up, and all that."

"Do you recognize the lady you took into your cab—that is, is she in this courtroom?"

"Yes, sir," and the witness nodded toward the defendant at the counsel table.

"Are you sure that this defendant is the lady you drove in your cab that night?"

"Yes, sir, quite sure."

"How was she dressed?"

"In black, sir."

"Are you sure she was dressed in black?"

"Yes, sir."

"Describe her costume."

"She wore a great big black coat falling to her feet, black furs around her neck, and a hat that had a heavy veil over it and at least appeared to be black."

"You, of course, had no opportunity of seeing the dress she wore underneath the big black coat?"

"No, sir."

"It might have been brown, might it not?"

"Oh yes, sir."

"Her hat might have been a brown one with a heavy black veil over it?"

"I should think it might, though that I don't know, sir."

"I show you 'People's Exhibit 10,' and ask you if you think it could have been this hat?" and the District Attorney whisked a smart brown hat on to the table.

"That's a brown hat, and it didn't look like that," said the witness.

Here the District Attorney deftly covered the brown hat with a thick, black chiffon veil, several times doubled. He stuck a pin here and there to hold the veil, producing a *tout ensemble* of somewhat startling effect, whereupon Counsel for Defence exclaimed, "The learned District Attorney is a very skilful milliner!"

"What about this hat now?" asked the District Attorney, swinging the head-piece about on his hand, then whirling it from finger to finger, as though proud of his production. "Doesn't it look like the hat the lady had on?"

"No, sir!" said the witness very decidedly.

"Isn't it black now?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then what's the matter with it?" shouted the District Attorney angrily.

"It ain't stylish, sir. The lady's hat was a stunner. The veil had sort o' kinks to it that you didn't put in."

"I should advise the dainty District Attorney to practise kink-making!" put in Harrison Wainright, and the District Attorney smiled benignly, thanking the Counsel for Defence for the suggestion.

"What kind of a dog was it that the lady had with her?"

"A right smart-looking little black beast, who stood up on his hind legs when the gentleman patted him good-bye."

"Is this the dog?" asked the District Attorney, pointing to Captain Jinks.

"He looks like him, sir, though he didn't have any ribbon on, as far as I can remember. Does this dog stand on his hind legs, sir?"

"I believe he does," answered the District Attorney, and turning to Captain Jinks he snapped his fingers at him, saying, "Up, sir!" But Captain Jinks treated him with silent contempt, remaining on all fours.

"If he won't stand on his hind legs I wouldn't like to identify him in a serious case like this," said the witness positively.

"Cannot your Honour order that the dog

be made to stand on his hind legs?" asked the District Attorney, addressing the Court.

"Your Honour, as the apparent counsel for the poodle, who seems now to have become the defendant in this case, I protest that my client should have the right to refuse to answer on the ground that it will incriminate himself," said Harrison Wainright, with a great air of solemnity.

There was a sound of the gavel to quell levity. "The Court sees no reason for making the dog stand on his hind legs, and besides, the Court does not know how to do it."

"But doubtless the defendant, your Honour, can induce the dog ao do so," pleaded the District Attorney.

"I object!" cried Harrison Wainright excitedly.

"Objection sustained," said the Court. "The Court cannot compel the defendant to do a thing that may incriminate her."

Harrison Wainright declined to cross-examine the witness, and the cabman left the chair, after adding greatly to the value of his testimony by the statement that it was about one o'clock in the morning when he got to Bethune Street and took the lady into the cab with the gentleman.

Then the District Attorney directed the Clerk to call for Peter Dennison. At the entrance to the stand a small boy of ten or twelve had the nature of an oath explained to him, and he solemnly swore to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

"Peter, did you ever see this dog before?" asked the District Attorney, pointing to "People's Exhibit A."

"Yes, sir."

"Tell when you saw him, where it was, and who was with him."

"Now, that there dog—why, hello, Cap'n!—I see with the lady over there." He pointed to the defendant.

"Where did you see the lady and the dog together?"

"Why, I seen 'em lots o' times together at lots o' places, and wunst they was in the Square."

"Washington Square?"

"Yes, sir, an' that wuz one time when the lady gimme a quarter dollar. She was stanin' outside the house where Mis' Herbert lives, what keeps the boarders where I delivers papers. The lady buys a paper o' me that night an' gimme a quarter an' says keep the change. She wuz goin' up the steps o' that house with the dog, an' she sudden-like turns round and says to the dog, 'I've changed my mind, Cap'n Jinks; not to-night!' and then she starts over to Broadway."

Here it was shown that the night of which Peter testified was some time before Miss Farrington had disappeared from Mrs. Herbert's.

"How was this lady dressed?" asked the District Attorney.

"Brown dress and great big brown hat an' veil," said the child.

"Would you think this was the dress?" asked the District Attorney, spreading out the broadcloth gown before him.

"Yessir, I sh'd say it war, an' she gimme a quarter that time, an' lots o' times when I sells papers to 'er she says 'Keep the change'; an' she wear that same dress to my house to see my little sister, an' make Cap'n dance for 'er; an' Mamie she laugh fit to kill, though 'er back be lame."

"I didn't ask you those things, Peter. That will do!" said the District Attorney hurriedly.

"But I got to tell un to yo jest the same!" protested the boy. "Didn't the oath say the *hull* truth? Yessir, I got to tell un; an' my mother says to tell the hull truth like the oath says to do, an' she says if I don't tell the hull truth I'll go to hell!"

"Your Honour," said the District Attorney, "might you not make it plain to this boy that he should answer only such questions as he is asked?"

"Mr. Ronner, please sir——" began the child, turning a frightened face to the Judge, when he was interrupted by a laugh from all those about him.

"Ain't that yer name, sir?" asked the boy anxiously. "Are they laffin' cause I got the name wrong? I thought as the other gentleman just now called ye Mr. Ronner!" With that the boy pointed to the District Attorney.

His Honour's eyes grew suspiciously dim. "Have you finished with the child?" he asked, turning to the District Attorney.

"Yes, your Honour."

Harrison Wainright approached the boy kindly. "What was it you wanted to tell about this lady, Peter?" he asked.

"Well, ye see, mister, my mother made me promise to tell the hull truth like the oath says; and this here lady she wunst brung my mother a whole satchell full o' grocers an' canned things, an' when my little sister died—that wuz Mamie what had the lame back—this here lady she come an' fix 'er all up pretty when she was dead in a white dress an' pink flowers—she put the dress on Mamie 'erself, an' she bought a coffin. Yessir, and she giv my mother money wunst to go sailin' on a boat, an' she sent my father to a place where they giv him gold to drink, so's he'd stop goin' to the saloon, an' he don't go to saloons no more now, an——"

"Your Honour, I protest that this is not cross-examination," said the District Attorney, with knitted brows.

"Mr. Ronner, I'm only tellin' the hull truth like the oath says," said the boy, appealing to the Judge. He did not know what "cross-examination" meant, but he suspected that somehow the "other gentleman" was trying to make him break his oath.

"What else were you going to say, Peter?" asked Wainright, after having waited for a judicial reproof, which did not come.

"Well, I guess I've told the hull truth now," said the boy faintly, wiping away a drop from his nose, and he went from the stand, leaving many wet eyes in the courtroom.

Next came several clerks and bell boys from the Hotel Illington, who testified that one night, or rather one morning, between one and two o'clock, on a date somewhere about the middle of February, Miss Allison had returned to the hotel with her dog apparently in a state of great excitement. Not one of them was willing to swear to the exact date, but they remembered it because it was so unusual for her or any

other lady to be out so late at night. No one was with her, except the dog, when she walked into the hotel. Where she had been, and how she had returned, whether by cab, subway, surface car, or walking they could not say, for at that hour nobody was standing at the hotel entrance. They remembered that something had happened to the elevator, and she made a complaint about having to walk upstairs, though her suite was only two flights up, and she very often did walk up, as did many of her visitors. Before this particular time she had never seemed to mind anything happening to the elevator; indeed, she had said on engaging her suite that she would not go higher than two flights, as she often used the stairs. On this particular occasion she had looked very tired, almost faint as she passed the office, and when informed that the elevator was not running she made an exclamation of impatience before she started to walk up. None of these witnesses could say for certain how Miss Allison was dressed that night. Certainly they remembered that she had often been seen in the brown dress that was exhibited by the District Attorney. Yes, they had a recollection of a very handsome plain black coat that she sometimes wore. They did not know if she had it on the night in question.

Asked if Miss Allison ever had any particular men callers, they remembered only certain well-known editors and literary men who called occasionally. They knew of no especial or frequent visitor, and indeed during the past two years she had seemed to be too busy to have many visitors.

Asked then if any callers might have gone to her suite without any one in the house knowing it, the reply was that this would be quite easy if such callers had not used the elevator, as besides the principal entrance on the Avenue there was a side entrance around the corner, where there was very often no boy in attendance. This side entrance was at the foot of the stairs, which were some distance from the elevator.

"Annette Lemoyne!" called the Clerk, and there entered through the witness-room door a trembling, frightened-looking bit of humanity.

"You are a chambermaid in the Hotel Illington?"

"Yes, sir."

"Has not Miss Allison, whose rooms you have looked after, often been away from her apartment all night during the past eighteen months?"

No answer came from the quivering lips.

"Answer me!"

"Yes—yes, sir."

"Did she not always tell you on those nights to say nothing about her absences to anybody in the house, and not to mention them to the other chambermaids?"

No answer, but only a frightened look toward the defendant, who now glared angrily at the District Attorney.

"Answer me! Do you hear?" in tones of thunder.

"Yes—yes, sir; she—she went to stay with a poor sick woman."

"Did she tell you that?"

"No, sir; but she was always going to stay with poor sick women."

The District Attorney broke forth into derisive laughter, which frightened the girl more than his thunderous tones had done

"Where did you work before you went to the Hotel Illington as a chambermaid?" he suddenly asked.

Little Annette's face fell into her hands, and a groan was her only reply.

"Were you not in prison before you went to the Hotel Illlington where Miss Allison got you your place, asking especially that you might be put on her floor, that she might use you for her own purposes, and to keep her secrets concerning the nights she spent out of the hotel?" screamed the District Attorney, adopting somewhat of Harrison Wainright's tacties to get in a half-dozen questions at once for effect on the jury.

There was still no answer, but every one in the room turned to dook at the defendant, who for the first time during the trial seemed to have lost her composure and was on the verge of an outburst of anger. Margaret Allison's face went white, her hands were clenched, and her counsel seemed to have difficulty in restraining her.

"Answer me!" cried the District Attorney, leaving the place where he stood, looking significantly at the jury, and going within a few steps of the mite on the stand, who now lifted her face and sobbed—

"In prison—yes, I went there! I been thief, and now I murder! I killed the Farrington because she did wicked to Mees Allison, who been good to me, poison her with the after-dinner café."

"Oh! The poor child!"

The cry came like a groan from the defendant, who had risen; then, whispering rapidly to Harrison Wainwright, sat down again.

"Your Honour," said Wainright, turning to the Judge, "this poor, frightened, unfortunate girl knows nothing whatever of this case, but out of her love for this defendant, and in her ignorance——"

"Yes, yes!" interrupted His Honour, casting a kindly eye on the poor little shivering waif. "She shall be cared for by the matron upstairs, and sent home when she is able to go."

"Mr. District Attorney," he said, turning sharply toward that gentleman, "this witness can be of no further use to you. Continue with your other witnesses," and an attendant led Annette away.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A SISTER TO ANNETTE.

On the fourth day of the trial several New York editors gave evidence concerning their business relations with Frances Fennimore Farrington. They had published her stories, both light and serious, and had written to her and received from her such letters as were necessary to carry out the transactions. In payment, they had sent her cheques, made out, by her written request, merely to "F. Farrington," and these cheques had been endorsed by her over to a person by the name of "H. St. John." On examination, it was found that these cheques had been through an unimportant little bank in the village of Ashburg, in Ohio. Not one of these editors had ever seen their contributor. Even Mr. James Lloyd, editor of the "Arlington Magazine,"

when put upon the witness stand, stated that he had tried at four different times to arrange an interview with Miss Farrington, but had been unsuccessful, she having written excusing herself from calling at his office. Once he had gone to the address in Washington Square, and was told by the landlady that she was out.

The theatrical manager, who produced her play, gave the same kind of testimony, and Mr. Henry Benson, of Benson and Company, asserted that he had twice gone to the house in Washington Square in an effort to see the author of the most successful book his house had ever published, and had been denied admittance. He had left his card, and the next day had received a note from Miss Farrington saying that she was not able to give him a personal interview. Asked if he had ever had any dealings with the defendant, Mr. Benson said that he had not, although she had offered him a book which he had been obliged to decline. He looked fearlessly and sadly into the face of the defendant as he said this. Certainly this venerable publisher would have been somewhat astonished had anyone told him that the old-established house of which he was now merely the ostensible manager was in reality the property of the prisoner at the bar; that Margaret Allison, the defendant, who sat at the counsel table looking at him so calmly, was herself Benson and Company, and had someone in the court-room giving this same information to her, it would probably have made no difference in the quiet gaze with which she regarded this elderly man to whom she had once offered a book in the belief that its publication by Benson and Company might help them to bolster up their falling fortunes.

After Mr. Benson had left the stand, his place was taken by the cashier of the Sixth National Bank, where the defendant kept her current account. He seemed to be an unwilling witness, but by deft questioning he was forced to admit that although up to eighteen months before Miss Allison had very rarely deposited money, but nearly always cheques, she had since that time deposited more money than cheques, and had frequently appeared at the bank with a large roll of money for deposit. He could not help noticing this, but, of course, had not considered it his business to make any remarks to Miss Allison upon the peculiarity of the circumstance. He made it known that at the present time Miss Allison's balance was nearly seven thousand dollars, a larger amount than he remembered her to have had before at any one time. It was often her custom to draw out a considerable sum for investing, and he remembered that during the past winter he had handled several cheques made out to various firms of brokers.

Then other editors were again called to the stand to testify that few stories by Margaret Allison had appeared in the current magazines during the past year and longer. Nevertheless, according to the cashier's statement, the defendant had been steadily adding to her balance month by month.

By this line of conducting the evidence, it was suspected that the District Attorney would try to prove that the defendant had in some way got possession of money that did not belong to her, and that among his other counts against her he intended, incidentally, to prove forgery, was guessed by his putting upon the stand two noted experts in handwriting to identify some scribbled signatures as being similar to other signatures which he gave them to inspect.

A half-dozen members of New York's literary set were called to testify to the jealousy the defendant had always shown toward her rival, the Englishwoman. They said that while everybody else at the social gatherings which Margaret Allison attended had taken occasion to praise the work of the gifted young foreign writer, the defendant had always been observed to keep a silent tongue and a sneering face.

There was then a call for Mrs. Gregory-Mills, who flusteringly made her way to the stand, and, still more flusteringly, left it, after Harrison Wainright had made her admit that she had never seen Miss Farrington in her life, had absolutely no acquaintance with any friends of hers, and that she had given her famous garden party "to meet Miss Frances Fennimore Farrington" without having first obtained that lady's permission, and that the lady had written her a note declining to be present. In the District Attorney's redirect examination, Mrs. Gregory-Mills said she had not preserved the note, and it was apparent that he was much distressed over this, as he would have considered it a valuable "exhibit" for The People, as showing Miss Farrington's style of handwriting to much better advantage than could be done with the mere signatures which he had been able to put in evidence for Mrs. Gregory-Mills said the note was entirely hand-written. As this witness retired, quite undone, she noted many triumphant looking faces among her arch-enemies, certain other would-be social leaders, who were attending the trial. It was believed that Mrs. Gregory-Mills would immediately take a trip abroad, to escape their sneers.

"Miss Ella O'Callahan!"

A pretty Irish dressmaker walked quickly to the witness chair, and settled herself in defiant attitude toward the Prosecution.

"Miss O'Callahan, are you a dressmaker?" asked the District Attorney.

"Now, have you any call to ask me that, when you know it as well as I do?" snapped the young woman. She was admonished by the Judge to answer properly, so she amended her answer.

"That's what I claim to be!"

"Did you make this dress?" and the notorious brown dress was placed in her lap.

"Of course I made it! Don't you see my name on the waist-belt, and isn't that how you got my address to bring me here?"

"For whom did you make it?"

"I made it for Miss Allison, and a time I had getting the material too, my Josephine running all over the town and wearing her shoes out, carrying a lock of Miss Allison's hair to match it. But it paid, that it did, for I will say that never brown-eyed, brown-haired woman could look like she did in that brown dress!"

"Will your Honour please admonish this witness that she is here to answer questions, and not to advertise her dressmaking establishment?" asked the District Attorney.

"Make your answers shorter, madam," said the Judge, bowing courteously.

"How much did you charge for making this dress?"

Here the witness showed fine scorn. "I'd have you know I charged for the whole dress, and not for the making separately. I'm not the sort that takes goods bought at sales to make up, and let ladies find their own whalebones and linings!"

"How much for the whole dress, then?" shouted the District Attorney, with a despairing lift of his hands to heaven.

"One hundred and thirty-three dollars, and cheap at the price! Why, the work I put on that skirt alone nearly blinded me, but it paid, that it did!"

"Isn't that a pretty big price for a literary lady to pay for a dress?"

"Now, I hope you don't suppose I'm accustomed to cater to literary people!" snapped Miss O'Callahan. "Of all the dowdy dowds, commend me to a literary woman; and besides, they never pay their bills!"

"Then you don't consider the defendant a literary woman, Miss O'Callahan?" asked the District Attorney blandly.

"She's different from the most of 'em, as I often say to her! It's a pleasure to dress her, that it is!" Here she nodded her head smilingly toward the defendant, then glared at the Prosecutor.

"You have just said, Miss O'Callahan, that literary people never pay their bills. Did this defendant pay her bills?"

"Did she pay her bills? Didn't she always pay 'em, and sometimes in advance, I'd like to know, when I was a bit short? Pay her bills!"

"Ah! She has been ordering her customary amount of clothes during the past year?"

"She never had such an outfit in her life as she's got at this minute. Why, that dress I made for her to wear to a garden party last summer—yes, to wear to meet that Englishwoman you say she's killed, she that wouldn't hurt a fly—why, you couldn't get another thing like that outside of Paris, and me slaving my fingers to the bone in hot July weather to get it done in time too!"

"Really, madam, I must ask you to contain yourself in the matter of self-advertising!" thundered the District Attorney.

"Then why did you bring me down here away from my work and ask a lot of impudent questions, I'd like to know?" retorted the exasperated modiste; "me with a debutante outfit on my hands and a whole wedding trousseau!"

Despairingly the District Attorney appealed to his Honour for protection against the tongue of the now thoroughly infuriated little Irishwoman; and mildly the Judge admonished Miss O'Callahan to shorten her answers.

"How much money had this defendant paid her during the past year for articles of wearing apparel?"

Miss O'Callahan turned to the Judge. "That's a very impertinent question, your Honour," she said. "Why, every customer I've got will leave me if I take to tattling to all New York what their bills amount to!"

Finally, when it was explained to her that in a court of law a great deal of prying into well-guarded secrets was necessary, she answered with an appealing look, as though begging pardon of the defendant:

"Something over two thousand dollars, but I don't know the exact amount."

"Is not that a large amount of money for a self-supporting woman to spend on clothes?" asked the District Attorney. "Haven't you many a married lady customer, the wife of a rich man, who does not spend more?"

"That I have!" answered Miss O'Callahan; "the stingy things."

The District Attorney looked meaningly at the jury. He had proven beyond a doubt the ownership of the brown dress, and he had proven that the defendant seemed to have been supplied with a large amount of money to spend on clothes.

Wainright walked over toward the witness. "Miss O'Callahan," he asked, "do you make this defendant's coats as well as her dresses?"

"All except her very heavy ones and her furs—yes, sir."

"Did you ever make a long black coat for her?"

"Oh, yes, several of them. I made her one at the beginning of the winter."

"The one she has on?" asked Wainright.

"Why, I made it. But that isn't a winter coat, it's for spring!" answered the dressmaker scornfully. "I made her a proper broadcloth coat for the winter."

"Will you please tell me all about that coat—just exactly what it looked like?"

"It was very simple, but very smart, I can tell you that. It just touched the ground. She always liked to have a coat like that to wear when she was going to a place which required a very dressy frock. She never liked to show her pretty clothes in the street. I made it almost tight in the back with shirring, and in the front it fell from the neck rather full, and she wore a black cloth belt with it that was attached at the back."

"Like this?" and here Counsel for Defence turned his back to the witness and placed his two hands together, as nearly as possible resembling a woman trying to feel if her back was properly fitted. His face was very solemn while he did this, his eyes anxious.

"Yes, something like that," assented Miss O'Callahan, quite as solemnly as her questioner.

"My venerable friend, Counsel for Defence, will make an excellent dressmaker with practice and patience!" tittered the District Attorney.

Wainright was too absorbed to make a retort. "Now, Miss O'Callahan, did the coat have a collar, and of what kind?"

"It had a rolling collar, trimmed with bands of the broadcloth stitched on."

"And was it lined?" asked Wainright, with a tone of appeal in his voice.

"Of course it was lined," said the witness impatiently. "You don't suppose she'd wear it unlined, do you? It was lined with white brocaded silk."

"With *white?*" shouted Wainright. "It could not have been white, Miss O'Callahan," and now the young lawyer's face was pathetic.

"I tell you it was white!" retorted Miss O'Callahan. "Don't you suppose I know what's the proper way to line my coats?"

Wainright began to walk excitedly in front of her. Suddenly his face brightened.

"But couldn't the white lining be removed somehow, Miss O'Callahan?" he asked.

"Why, of course; it could be ripped out."

"And couldn't another lining be put in—some other colour, black or red or blue or green?"

"Of course!" said the witness in contemptuous tone.

"And would a dressmaker have to put the other lining in? Could not almost anybody rip the lining out very carefully, and lay it on some other colour, and cut it exactly like it, and then sew it in—now couldn't they really, Miss O'Callahan, don't you think?"

Counsel for Defence looked forlornly appealing in his bachelor ignorance, and somehow the witness felt he was trying to get at certain important evidence which neither she nor anybody else could understand. She spoke quite comfortingly—

"Yes, they could, Mr. Wainright, if they had some knowledge of sewing and were careful, but probably they couldn't do it as perfectly as I could."

"And now, that collar with stitched bands on it. Couldn't the bands be all taken off and the collar made to look different, or couldn't a new collar be made and sewed on in place of the first one—now couldn't that be done, too?"

"Yes, it could, Mr. Wainright, just as easy," assented Miss O'Callahan, nodding positively.

"That's all, Miss O'Callahan," said Wainright breathlessly, and he mopped his brow of the perspiration that had gathered on it when he had feared he might be contradicted by this noted expert in the matter of collars and linings. Back at the counsel table, he took a glass of water, and settled in his chair with more of confidence in his face than he had worn since the trial began.

Edward Jackson, manufacturer, was next called to the stand, and before his examination began the District Attorney again asked his Honour that "Exhibit A" be brought into the court-room, and Captain Jinks smartly trotted in close at the heels of his keeper, Jim Riley.

"Mr. Jackson, have you ever seen this dog before?" asked the District Attorney, and Captain Jinks was walked slowly up and down in front of the witness.

"I can say with absolute positiveness that I have," answered Mr. Jackson. He was then told to tell precisely when he had seen him.

"Some months ago—I cannot give the exact date—I was leaning against one of the trees at the entrance to the park in Washington Square, when I saw a lady walking on the opposite side where the houses are situated, leading by a leather dog-lead a black French poodle-dog. He walked quite contentedly with her for some distance, when suddenly he squatted down in front of a house which I remember well and have since learned is occupied by a Mrs. Herbert, who takes lodgers. The lady tried to induce the dog to go on, but he refused to budge, and then he began holding up his paw at her and shaking it in her face. She shook her hand at him, seemed to be arguing with him very gently. I heard her voice but could not tell what she said, but I knew she was explaining to him that he must trot along. For at least ten minutes, I should say, this went on. I particularly noticed all that took place, because I am very fond of dogs, and I was so glad the lady was patient and did not attempt to hit the dog. She merely seemed to be appealing to him. The dog got terribly excited, panted, and once in a while gave a little sharp bark of protest. Once he got away from her and started up the steps of the house, but she ran after him, and large as he was she took him in her arms and carried him for almost a block. That was the last I saw of them."

"You are very sure this is the dog?"

"I am as positive as it is possible to be of anything."

"Do you see in this court-room the lady who was with the dog?"

The witness looked about the room very slowly and carefully.

"I do not."

"Look again, very carefully," commanded the District Attorney.

Again the witness looked, and again he said no.

"Look at this defendant!" said the District Attorney, and Edward Jackson's eyes travelled to Margaret Allison, resting them on her.

"Was not this defendant with the dog that day?" asked the District Attorney.

"She was not."

"Was she not wearing a heavy veil so that you could not distinguish the lady's features?" cried the District Attorney in amazement tinged with anger.

"The lady was not wearing any veil at all, and she was not in the slightest degree like this defendant."

"Describe the lady you saw with the dog!" and now the District Attorney glowered at the witness.

"If the defendant would stand up I could tell something about whether there was any similarity in height," said the witness, and Margaret stood up.

"The lady I saw with the dog," went on the witness, "was at least and inch and a half shorter than this defendant. I call this defendant a woman of medium height, and I should describe the lady with the dog as a short woman. She had blue eyes, while this defendant has brown. Her hair was a very light brown, almost blonde, while this defendant has quite dark brown hair. Her nose was what I should call aquiline, while the defendant's is not. Her neck was shorter than the defendant's. She was an altogether different looking woman. She—she—she——"

The witness stammered and looked embarrassed.

"Please go on," said the District Attorney, "with what you were about to say."

"Well," said Mr. Jackson, flushing to his hair, "the lady I saw with the dog was not nearly so handsome as this defendant—not to be compared with her, though the lady with the dog was not at all a bad-looking woman!"

During this description everyone in the room noticed that the assistant of the District Attorney was leaning over and conversing rapidly with his chief. The assistant seemed to have made a discovery, and as the District Attorney listened, his face brightened, and he nodded his head knowingly. The assistant went out of the room for a few minutes, then returned, and again engaged in conversation with his chief, all in whispers.

"I am through with this witness for the present. Will you cross-examine?" said the District Attorney, almost courteously, to Counsel for Defence.

Wainright shook his head. He had nothing to ask, and then at a nod from the District Attorney, the crier called—

"Miss Carolyn Blaine!"

Heads were twisted and necks craned to see this young woman, bosom friend of the defendant, summoned by the Prosecution to help convict her.

"Are you acquainted with this defendant?"

"I am."

How long have you known her?"

"Over sixteen years."

"Where did you first meet her?"

"At boarding-school."

"What sort of a scholar was she?"

"A very brilliant one!"

"I mean what was she like as a young girl—how were her morals considered?"

"I don't know what you mean!"

"I mean, was she not looked upon as being very different from the other girls of her age?"

"I think she was."

"Did she not have peculiar views upon the subject of crime, and did she not several times shock her teachers by certain essays that she wrote, and was she not particularly deficient in truthfulness?"

Carolyn Blaine looked at the District Attorney scornfully. "If you mean was she not peculiarly charitable in her attitude toward evil-doers, I will say yes, she was. As for her essays and compositions, they showed great maturity of mind and she was the most strictly honest and honourable girl in the school."

"But is it not true that she was particularly prone to associate with evil companions, and has she not always shown a disposition, ever since you knew her, to make companions of such persons as broke moral laws and were given over to crime?"

The witness locked him calmly in the eyes. "All this is true!" she said. "It was also true of Christ!"

Somewhat disconcerted, the District Attorney turned over the leaves of what appeared to be a statement he held in his hand.

"Has not this defendant often told you that she believed everyone was a potential thief, a potential murderer? Has she not often assured you, and others in your presence, that she believed herself capable of yielding to great temptations, and has she not in this way tried to excuse nearly every member of the criminal classes with whom she has been brought into contact?"

"Let me ask you," returned the witness, "who are the Strong? Are they not always those who doubt their own strength? Who fall so quickly as those who judge the fallen? Is not strength always given to the humble?"

"Did I ask you to preach a sermon?" snapped the District Attorney.

"No, you didn't," retorted the witness coolly, "but I saw you needed one!"

There was a pause, then the Prosecutor asked—

"Do you know this dog as belonging to the defendant?"

"Yes."

"Have you often taken him out to walk, when you were not accompanied by his mistress?"

"Yes."

"Did you not, on a certain date, about seven months ago, take this dog for a walk through Washington Square?"

"I may have taken him there a great many times."

"Did he not on the particular date to which I have referred, and perhaps at other times, stop short before Mrs. Herbert's house, as though he knew someone inside that house, and was accustomed to going there, and did you not have great difficulty in getting him past that house?"

Not once dropping her eyes from those of her questioner, the witness answered calmly—

"No, he never did!"

There was a gasp of astonishment from the District Attorney as he suddenly sat down. Harrison Wainright was rising to cross-examine when Margaret, white to the lips, her eyes on Carolyn, drew him back with an excited whisper, "Let her go!"

Then Carolyn Blaine passed out of the court-room sister to Annette.

CHAPTER XXV

THE MYSTERIOUS MR. ST. JOHN

Mary Gallagher, scullery-maid, scrub-woman, and doer of odd jobs of a menial order for Mrs. Flemming, next-door neighbour to Mrs. Herbert in Washington Square, sat in the witness chair and blinked and fidgeted uncomfortably. Miss Gallagher had prying blue eyes, which, however, were not unkindly in their outlook. She had a pursed-up mouth that seemed to be on the point of whistling; her turn-up nose had a small smut on it which looked for all the world like a dried sprinkle of black stove lead; her forearms and wrists depended redly from her elbow sleeves; her thin hair hung in greasy wisps about her ears and over her collar.

Encouraged by the questioning of the District Attorney, Miss Gallagher deposed that every morning about nine o'clock she was accustomed either to brush down or scrub the white marble steps of Mrs. Flemming's residence, and that often, by way of recreation during that operation, she had been in the habit of examining the steps that went up to the front doors of the neighbours' houses on either side of her, in order to discover if they were kept as well as she kept hers. On such occasions she had several times noticed a tall young lady going up the steps of Mrs. Herbert's house, and letting herself in with a latch-key. This young lady was very straight and very stiff, so it seemed to Miss Gallagher, although once she actually stopped and spoke to Miss Gallagher, and Miss Gallagher noted that the lady did not speak like other ladies who called on her mistress, or for whom she had worked. The lady had come close to the scrub pail and said—

"Do you hearthstone the steps in this country? Pray, where do you buy the stone?"

Miss Gallagher did not know what "hearthstoning" meant, and she so informed the inquisitive lady, who then laughed, and said that she now saw the steps were marble and would not need to be treated like London steps. With that the lady had

gone on and entered Mrs. Herbert's house. While she had been speaking to Miss Gallagher, the lady had worn a veil of heavy chiffon, and had not looked straight into the eyes of Miss Gallagher. She wore also a very large high hat, after the latest fashion. Miss Gallagher remembered her as having a pretty complexion and pretty teeth, and she would always remember her voice, but she did not feel that she would know her again. On this particular morning, it was earlier than usual, it was winter and foggy, so it was hard to see just what the lady looked like. No sooner had the lady got into the hall, according to Miss Gallagher, than Mrs. Herbert's door opened again and another lady rushed out, dressed all in blue, a Russian blouse suit made very full and big, and she wore no veil over her small hat. Witness thought the two ladies must have passed each other in the hall, the one going in, the other going out. The lady who came out was now in the court-room. Miss Gallagher stopped for breath, and then pointed to the defendant. Asked how the lady who went into Mrs. Herbert's was dressed, witness said she wore a striped gown, whereat Harrison Wainright exclaimed impatiently—

"The woman must have been an escaped convict, but why she wore stripes outside of prison is a mystery to me!"

Thomas MacMahon, a member of the District Attorney's staff, was next called. He stated that he had just returned from the village of Ashburg, Ohio, where he had gone to get information of H. St. John, over to whom Miss Farrington had endorsed her cheques. There was but one bank in the village, and he had been told by the cashier that about two years ago a man, giving the name of H. St. John, had come to the village and opened an account at the bank, depositing two thousand dollars, and said that cheques made out to him or endorsed over to him would be deposited from time to time, and that he would always leave a balance of two thousand dollars on hand.

The bank's business had always been a very small one, and they were glad to get this new depositor, asking few questions. The man offered as reference a Mr. John Henderson, a prominent business man of Cincinnati, and gave his only address as care of Mr. Henderson. The reference had not been hunted up, as the stranger's large balance made the matter safe enough. During the past two years the only deposits that had been made were cheques from various publishing concerns in New York, made out to F. Farrington, endorsed by the same name with addition "Pay to the order of H. St. John." No money had been drawn out during this time, so that there were now several thousand dollars to Mr. St. John's credit. Nothing more was known of him, and inquiries for Mr. John Henderson developed the fact that he had retired from business and was now travelling somewhere in South America. None of the cheques had been sent to the bank now for more than two months.

The next witness was a man who had once seen a lady wearing a striped gown entering Mrs. Herbert's house. Closely questioned, he admitted that he had not been able to see the lady's face, but only her back, as she opened the door with a key.

"I have no cross-examination to make," said Harrison Wainright. Then, turning to the Judge, he said wearily, "I am wondering, your Honour, how so many persons are able to identify this missing woman by her back. Has nobody ever seen her face distinctly? For my own part, all backs look alike to me."

His Honour slightly turned his face as he brought down the gavel, thus interrupting the titter of merriment which the sally of Counsel for Defence seemed to have started, and then the District Attorney called the next witness.

"Miss Helen Morton!"

Miss Morton, dressed all in black, except for a bunch of violets on her hat and a white lace collar at her throat, rustled into the witness chair, and confidently awaited the District Attorney's questions. She was told to relate what she had seen and heard on a certain afternoon in the foregoing October.

"I started to go in to see Miss Allison to ask her something about the part I was playing, when I heard voices in her apartment and decided not to disturb her. In response to something that was said to her, I heard her say very bitterly, 'I tell you I feel a personal antipathy to the very name of the author of this so-called most successful book of a decade!' Then again she exclaimed, 'Now, I'll make a bold attempt to sweep this Frances Fennimore Farrington from the earth!' I was in a hurry, and I went away to my own apartments, returning again to see Miss Allison, and just as I knocked I heard her say, 'Oh, your ladyship!' as though she were threatening someone. Then she walked out, dressed for the street, so I could not make my call. She seemed in a great hurry. I wondered to whom she had been talking, and asked her if Miss Blaine had taken tea with her, and she refused to answer me, saying there was no reason why I should be interested in her visitors. Then she hurried away. Her dog was with her."

"I hand you, Miss Morton," said the District Attorney, " 'People's Exhibit Nos. 7 and 8,' and ask if you ever saw them before, and under what circumstances."

The District Attorney handed the witness two trunk checks, such as are issued by transfer companies.

"Yes. I found these hidden away in a small secret drawer of the defendant's writing-desk at the Illington."

These checks were handed to the jury, that they might be compared with the checks found on the unclaimed trunks at the dock, and they proved to be the identical numbers.

Miss Morton then identified the brown broadcloth dress as one she had often seen the defendant wearing, and which she had got from her apartment at the "Illington" by the District Attorney's orders.

"People's Exhibit No. 15" was a sheet of paper upon which was scribbled innumerable times the name "Frances Fennimore Farrington," and Miss Morton deposed to having found it also in the secret drawer of the defendant's writing-desk. He also showed her an old envelope of a registered letter on the back of which was written, "From J. Henderson, — Street, Cincinnati," which she also identified as

having found in the desk. Then came a hundred or more pages of typewritten manuscript.

"I found this also at the defendant's desk at the 'Illington,' which I searched by your orders," said Miss Morton, examining them.

While the examination of this star witness for the Prosecution was going on Harrison Wainright watched her very intently. A part of the time he seemed not to be listening to either the questions or the answers, but merely to be studying the whole face and figure of the witness. Up and down roved his eyes taking in her hat, her wrap, her boots, the gloves she wore. If he realized that the evidence she was giving was damning to the case of the defence, and that he had no way of controverting her testimony, his demeanour showed no signs of agitation.

When the District Attorney had finished, and had, with a show of triumph, directed him to proceed with cross-examination, Wainright began walking leisurely up and down the front of the witness, his face taking on an expression of puzzlement, as though he really had nothing to ask her.

"The witness may be excused if Counsel does not wish to cross-examine," said the Court.

"Your Honour, I think I have only one question to ask this witness, one little matter to clear up." Now Wainright walked up in front of Helen Morton and extended his hands. She confronted him smilingly.

"Miss Morton," he began quietly, extending his hands still further toward her, and then his voice rose till it pierced the uttermost points of the room, becoming a shout. "WHERE DID YOU GET THIS COAT?" and his hands grasped the fastenings down the front and flung the coat apart, displaying a black satin lining to the outer broadcloth.

His shout was answered by a shriek from the witness chair, as Helen Morton fainted.

Then above the stillness which followed the clamour rose the sonorous voice of the District Attorney, "The People rest!"

CHAPTER XXVI

THE HYPOTHETICAL QUESTION

When the District Attorney so suddenly and in such extraordinary manner rested the case for The People, there were persons in the courtroom who believed that the backbone of The Prosecution was broken. In certain respects he had acted without precedent. In the beginning he had promised to exhibit a perfect chain of evidence to convict the prisoner, and certainly some of the links were missing.

However, Harrison Wainright, who, during the few days of this trial, had been doing some rapid "growing up" in a legal way, felt sure that the District Attorney, instead of having less evidence than he expected, was putting himself in the way of getting more. He was positive that the "rest" was but a temporary one, that the move was merely one to gain time, that the District Attorney wished particularly to get into the cross-examination of the defendant herself, in order that he might put on his more important witnesses in rebuttal. Wainright believed that among these would be Harriet Herbert, the young daughter of the lodging-house keeper, who must have known that Margaret Allison was a frequent caller upon Miss Farrington, since her mother had deposed to admitting only one visitor, the man who had called shortly before Miss Farrington disappeared. Wainright had discovered that the District Attorney was still searching for this man, whom he, Wainright, believed to be the person to whom the Englishwoman had made over her cheques, and who, being perhaps a countryman of hers, had pronounced his name "Sinjun" in English fashion, and had been understood by Mrs. Herbert to say "Sinton."

In opening the case for the defendant, Wainright had little to say to the jury. He said that she, strong in her own innocence, had declined to take counsel, intending to conduct her own case, but, he added, that having been appointed by the Court, he should do his best to look after her interests, and that his client would take the stand in her own defence.

He then called his first witness. It was Dr. Charles Boynton. A slight boyish-looking fellow came forward to answer the call. He blushed as he bowed to the Judge, and stationed himself somewhat uncomfortably on the edge of the witness chair.

"What is your age?" asked Wainright.

"Twenty-four."

"What is your profession?"

"A physician and surgeon."

"Of what institution are you a graduate?"

"The New York College of Physicians and Surgeons."

"Are you connected with any hospital at the present time?"

"Yes, I have been at the Bellevue Hospital for the past year."

"Have you during that time, and also previous to going to Bellevue Hospital, examined the bodies of persons who have met death by drowning?"

"I have."

"Have you examined a considerable number of such bodies?"

"I have, both as a student at college and at the hospital."

"Did you see at the Morgue the body said to have been that of Frances Fennimore Farrington?"

"I did."

"Did you make an examination of it?"

"I did."

"How was it that you happened to make this examination?"

"I asked to be allowed to make the examination for purposes of study, and permission was given me to do so."

"Did you at that time have any idea that you would be called by me to give evidence in this case?"

"I did not."

"From the examination which you made of that body, are you prepared to give an opinion as to the age of the woman?"

"I am."

"What, in your opinion, was her age?"

"She was a woman between forty and forty-five years of age."

"Would you then, on that account, doctor, be prepared to assert that the body found at Pier 56½ in the North River could not have been the body of Frances Fennimore Farrington, she having been declared to be

a woman of not more than thirty years of age?"

"That would be one of the reasons for my assertion that it was not the body of Frances Fennimore Farrington."

"Have you, then, another reason to support your opinion?"

"I have."

"What is that reason?"

"The short length of time which the body I examined had been in the water."

"How long had the body which you examined at the Morgue been in the water?"

"At the most, it had been there but one week."

"Are you aware that it has been asserted by the coroner's physician, and also by another physician who gave evidence in this case for The People, that the body had been in the water about five weeks?"

"I am, but I am absolutely positive that the witnesses made a mistake."

"How do you know that the body which you examined could not have been in the water more than one week?"

"Because of the colour of the eyes."

"Please explain exactly what you mean by that, doctor."

"It is a fact, observed by all who have examined bodies taken from the water, that for every day a body has been in the water the eyes have turned lighter, and, at the end of one week, eyes, which during life were a black or a dark brown, would have become as light as hazel. After having remained more than a week in the water, the eyes, getting gradually lighter, would become blue—a fishy blue—so that there would be no possible way of determining what colour the eyes had been in life. They would turn to this fishy blue no matter what their colour in life. An examination of the books at the Morgue in which descriptions of drowned bodies are kept will show this—that always after a description which says a body has been in the water more than six or seven days, there is this note—'Eyes, can't tell.'"

"What, then, doctor, was the colour of the eyes, of the body you examined at the Morgue?"

"They were a hazel, which would mean that a week before, in life, they had been a dark brown or black."

"You are then prepared to state that the body found near the oyster scow in the North River could not possibly have been that of Frances Fennimore Farrington?"

"I object!" snapped the District Attorney. "That is a matter for the jury to decide!"

"Objection sustained!" said the Court.

Wainright began again. "It has been asserted, doctor, that Frances Fennimore Farrington was a woman not over thirty years of age, so that you are able to say positively—are you not?—that such being the case, the body could not have been that of Frances Fennimore Farrington, it being, as you are convinced, the body of a woman about forty-five years of age?"

"I object!" again shouted the District Attorney, and his objection was sustained by the Court, but Wainright had got his point before the jury, even though the witness was not allowed to answer, and the twelve were looking particularly interested.

Wainright had not yet finished with his witness. He went to the counsel table and picked up a note, which he read through to himself carefully. Then he said—

"Doctor, I will now put to you a hypothetical question: Assume that this defendant was, on the 27th day of March in her apartment at the Hotel Illington. Assume that she was being visited by her close friend, Miss Carolyn Blaine. Assume that after conversing for some time upon various topics, it was proposed that this defendant and her French poodle dog should dance the Minuet for the entertainment of her friend. Assume that Miss Blaine thereupon sat down to the piano and played the music which usually accompanies that dance. Assume that this defendant thereupon rose from her chair and, calling her French poodle to her, took him by the paws and began to dance with him the Minuet——"

"Doctor, have you assumed it?" asked Wainright solicitously.

"I have!" answered the young doctor solemnly.

"Assume, then," went on Wainright, "that while Miss Blaine was playing the piano, and while this defendant and her French poodle were dancing the Minuet, there came a knock at the door which this defendant did not hear. Assume that, turning around in the course of the dance, she saw an officer of the court standing in the door of her apartment, and that she made an exclamation of surprise. Assume that when she walked over to him and inquired his business he handed her a warrant for her arrest for the murder of Frances Fennimore Farrington. Assume that she read it over once; then read it again very carefully. Assume that then she did not make any exclamation or utter one word, but assume that she simply turned very red in the face, and afterwards said 'Ah!' or 'What!'——

"Have you assumed it, doctor?" asked Wainright anxiously.

"I have," returned Doctor Boynton pompously.

"Then, having assumed all this, I ask you, doctor, what, in your opinion as a professional and as a scientific man, was the cause of this defendant turning red in the face?"

"It was the blush of conscious innocence," answered the doctor.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE DEFENDANT DENIES

When Margaret Allison seated herself in the witness chair, ready to testify in her own defence, her attitude seemed as far as possible removed from what one would naturally expect to see in a person guilty or accused of an atrocious crime.

The drawn look which had been noticeable on her face at the opening of the trial had disappeared, and her pink and white complexion was aglow with health, for she had not yet been long enough in the Tombs to be touched by the notorious "prison pallor" which marks the waiting inhabitants of the place. Her eyes shone with a light that appeared to be made up of half-amused, half-malicious excitement.

She was wearing the same smart long black silk coat which had covered her throughout the trial. Her little toque hat was poised as correctly upon her head and

her coiffure was as perfect as though she had made her toilette before her dainty dressing-table at the "Illington," with its long swinging oval glass, rather than having "made herself pretty" in a dark cell without the aid of so much as a hand mirror.

She bowed to the Judge, then to the jury, giving also a little courtesy bob to the District Attorney, and, adjusting her feet upon the green-plush cushion which an attendant had brought at His Honor's command, she sat comfortably back in her chair, as though she were about to preside at a meeting of one of her clubs.

"Miss Allison," said Harrison Wainright solemnly, "although you have at the beginning of this trial pleaded 'not guilty' to the charge against you, I now ask you, after you have taken the oath, to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth—Are you guilty of the crime for which you have been indicted?"

"Kindly read the charge," said the witness, leaning her head toward him with something of attention.

He looked surprised, but carefully and slowly read the indictment.

"Are you, Miss Allison," repeated Wainright, "guilty of this charge which I have just read to you?"

"Most certainly not!" replied the witness scornfully, in some such manner as she might have denied an accusation of eating peas with a spoon.

"Miss Allison, I now ask you if you ever went to the house of Mrs. Herbert in Washington Square to call upon the deceased?"

"I did not."

"Did you ever ride with the deceased in a cab?"

"I did not."

"Did you ever go in the company of the deceased to Pier 48 or near Pier 48 of the White Star Line?"

"I did not."

"Did you walk with the deceased along to the right, past the Wilson, Cunard, and other piers in that neighborhood, to Pier number 56½?"

"I did not."

"Were you ever, either alone or accompanied, at Pier number 56½?"

"I never was. I did not know there was such a pier in New York until after I was arrested and in the Tombs."

"Did you ever have any business relations with the deceased?"

"Never."

"Did you have any feeling of jealousy, professional or otherwise, toward the deceased?"

"No."

"Did you in any way regard the deceased as a dangerous rival, or even as a rival at all?"

"I certainly never did."

"Did you ever threaten to take away the life of the deceased, to bring about her financial ruin, or to sweep her from the face of the earth?"

"Did you ask if I threatened these things against the deceased?" asked the witness cautiously.

"Yes, I asked you that."

"Then I say I never did."

"Did the deceased ever injure you in any way?"

"She never did."

"Did you ever injure her?"

"Indeed, no!"

"Did you know the deceased?"

"I did not."

"Did you ever speak to the deceased?"

"I did not."

"Did you ever see the deceased?"

"Not to my knowledge."

"Did you ever forge the name of the deceased?"

"I did not."

'Is it true that in any possible way, such work as was done by the deceased, affected unfavourably the state of your finances, or appeared to you so to affect them?"

"No."

"Had you, in fact, any feeling of enmity or of ill-will towards the deceased?"

"I had not."

"Miss Allison, is it true, as your dressmaker, Miss O'Callahan, testified on this stand, that she made for you last winter a long black broadcloth coat, fitting into the back with shirring, having a broad collar trimmed with stitched bands of the same material, having a belt which was easily detachable, the coat falling to your feet so that it just touched the ground, and lined with white brocaded silk?"

"Yes, she made me such a coat."

"Did you ever wear it?"

"Yes, a few times."

"Is that coat now in your possession, or rather was it in your possession at the time of your arrest?"

"It was not."

"What became of that coat?"

"I gave it away," and now the witness looked angrily at her questioner.

"To whom did you give it?"

"I decline to answer!"

"I insist upon an answer!" said Wainright, steadily looking her in the eyes.

"I still decline, however!" she replied, gazing back.

"Your Honour," said Wainright, "it is doubtless without precedent that Counsel for Defence should have to appeal to the Court to force a witness, and that witness the defendant, to answer a question. However, I beg that your Honour will direct this witness to answer me."

"Answer the question, madam!" said the Court.

"Your Honour," said the witness, turning to the Judge, "I am conducting my own defence, and the Counsel appointed by the Court is examining me now only on sufferance. Is it in accordance with either precedent or the law of this state that I be obliged to answer this most inconvenient question? If so, I ask that your Honour excuse me from answering!"

Wainright looked appealingly to the Judge, who gazed searchingly at the defendant.

"The Court cannot excuse you! The Court directs you to answer the question put by Counsel for Defence!" and his Honour sternly nodded to Wainright to repeat the question.

"Miss Allison, I ask you to whom did you give that coat?"

The witness hesitated, looking despairingly at his Honour's set face, and answered—

"I gave it to Miss Helen Morton!"

A smile of triumph came over Wainright's face, and he looked meaningly at

the jury, who appeared to be both surprised and interested.

Then Wainright paused as though uncertain how to continue his examination. He looked at the District Attorney, whose expression was merely one of sneering acceptance of this information. Again the young attorney remembered that there were witnesses to come in rebuttal, but he remembered that he also could call witnesses in sur-rebuttal. Now Wainright, as well as the District Attorney, was playing a waiting game. He also had scouts out, personal friends of his own who, like the young doctor, had volunteered to help him save his client in spite of herself. He dreaded that she should get into the tigerish clutches of the District Attorney, yet strangely enough he turned to that gentleman and said suddenly—

"Cross-examine!"

The District Attorney did not begin his cross-examination of the defendant until after the recess. Just before court opened, he went out of the little gate that led to the space where the newspaper men and women were gathered, and, sitting down among them, he was noticed to be chatting with various members of the group. As he talked he motioned back and forth with a pencil, as though to give emphasis to certain of his remarks at which the journalists were laughing, and it was observed that once or twice he took a paper pad from one and another of them, wrote off a few words, and passed it back, as though trying to give them assistance in their work.

Then, as at a sign from the clerk it was shown that the Judge was about to enter, and every one in the room rose,the District Attorney swung hastily back into his own little pen, with an expectant, anticipating look in his eyes, showing that he was ready for the fight and felt sure of victory. Most cautiously he placed two bottles of smelling salts on the table, and a titter ran round the room, as it was surmised that he intended one for himself and one for the witness should she appear to need it in passing through the ordeal of his questioning. Then he took from the floor his ubiquitous brown pig-skin bag and placed it on the table.

He adjusted his glasses, readjusted the pencil between the thumb and forefinger of his right hand, while, with his left, he brought forth from the brown bag a little black book.

"Is this your diary?" he asked of the defendant on the stand.

"I don't keep a diary," replied Margaret. "I look upon it as a dangerous practice."

"Yes," said the District Attorney, with a meaning smile, "it is sometimes a dangerous practice. Nevertheless, I think this is yours," and he handed her the little black book.

Margaret examined it with evident surprise. A smile brightened her eye, then a tear dimmed it.

"Yes, this is my diary," she said, "the diary I kept at boarding-school when I was between thirteen and fifteen years old. I wonder where you got it. I lost it while I was at school."

The District Attorney merely smiled.

"Did you," he asked, "write the following in your diary when you were between the tender ages of thirteen and fifteen?" Here he proceeded to read slowly and distinctly with his face toward the jury-box—

"Last night the Juniors gave a performance of the 'Two Orphans.' They couldn't act a little bit, but I like the play, especially where the Nun tells the big whopper. It was probably the most actively righteous thing the poor old Nun ever did in her life, and I just imagine they had a high old time in Heaven fixing up the Record Book.

"To-day in the French recitation room, Miss de Salles asked each one of us to tell her in French what we would like to be when we grew up. All the girls laughed when I said I wanted to be a great writer like George Eliot, and Miss de Salles laughed too when I said I intended to be the very greatest that ever was, and if anybody tried to be my rival I'd just make her sit up and take notice.

"I've gone and done it—what the nice old Nun did in the 'Two Orphans.' Mary Blake was just going to be expelled because her credit-marks are down to six and a half. They got down to that because she talked to me from the third storey window (though I didn't answer back), and that nasty sneaking Jennie MacLean, with her Presbyterian pug nose, heard her and went and tattled. Miss de Salles asked me if Mary talked to me from the window, and I said 'No, Miss de Salles, she did not!' and I said it awful solemnly, because I know about Mary's wicked stepmother at home, who would make her sit among the cinders or something if she got expelled from school, and Miss de Salles said she believed me because I was always strictly honourable, and now Mary can stay right on, and I've told her she'd better toe the mark, after I went and told a lie for her.

"I've just been in Adelaide Mayhew's room. None of the other girls will speak to her because they say that the most awful things are true about her, and her mother sent her to school to get her away from a wicked man. Carolyn Blaine is awful mad because I associate with poor Adelaide, who hasn't anybody else to go with, but I just told Carolyn that folks that did wrong attracted me. I think and I think about it, and somehow it just seems to me you never can be truly great and big and noble and charitable until you've gone and done a perfectly horrible crime or committed a right-down big sin. Carolyn says it isn't so, but I quoted Peter to her and the lie he told, and see what a saint he became afterwards."

The District Attorney threw the book back into the bag. "Did you write these things?" he asked.

"I feel pretty sure that I did," answered Margaret, and now her eyes were not merry but sad. She had not remembered until this morning that the day she had lost her diary at boarding-school Jennie MacLean had come to her room to get some help about an algebra lesson. Had Jennie taken it, kept it all these years, and reading in some far-off city that Margaret Allison was accused of murder, posted it to the District Attorney to be used against her, to pay her up for the disrespectful entry made about Jennie's nose?

The District Attorney recalled her to the present.

"Some of these things that you wrote so long ago you still hold to be good doctrine, do you not?"

"I do, though I should probably express the doctrine somewhat differently," answered the defendant, with a smile, whereupon the Prosecutor turned triumphantly to the jury, as who should pass upon the utter depravity of this woman.

"I hand you now, 'People's Exhibit No. 19,' and ask you if you wrote it?" and he passed her an article cut from a weekly paper.

"I did."

"When did you write it—this flippant article entitled 'The Law as a "Hass" '?" he demanded.

"I don't remember the exact date," returned the witness, "but I know it was on the evening of the day when I saw you conduct the case of The People against Conyers," and his Honour thumped his gavel to quell an incipient giggle in the back of the room.

"Your Honour, I venture that this woman's flippancy of manner and her cheap would-be wit are turning this solemn trial into a farce," exclaimed the District Attorney to the Judge. His Honour was choking over a fifth glass of water, and made no reply.

"Do you know John Henderson, of Cincinnati?" shouted the District Attorney, almost beside himself with rage.

"I do."

"What are your relations with him?"

"Very friendly."

"I hand you now 'People's Exhibit No. 20,' and ask what was in it when you received it." He handed the witness a large envelope which had been registered, addressed to her at the Hotel Illington, and bearing the address of J. Henderson on the back.

"There was money in it," answered the witness.

"Did not John Henderson frequently send you registered letters containing money?"

"Yes."

"Where did he get it?"

"By cashing cheques for me which I sent to him."

"Have you not a bank account in New York?"

"I have."

"Was not your bank the proper place for you to deposit your cheques or to get them cashed?"

"Yes, in the natural order of things certainly, but these were cheques I did not want to have go through my bank."

"Why not?"

"They were not made out in my name, and they had to do with business that was entirely private."

"Was that business in any way related to the affairs of Frances Fennimore Farrington?"

"It was."

"Did you not tell your Counsel that you did not know and never had any relations with Frances Fennimore Farrington?" cried the Prosecutor triumphantly.

"I never did."

"You never did what!"

"I never told Counsel for Defence that I did not know Frances Fennimore Farrington, or that I had no business relations with her."

"What!" Then the Prosecutor turned to the jury and, lifting his eyes to heaven, exclaimed, "Oh, Sapphira!"

He appealed then to the Judge. "Will your Honour please have all the testimony given by this defendant in the direct examination read?" The Court ordered this to be done, and the stenographer read it off in sing-song fashion.

"What have you to say to this testimony which you have given?" asked the District Attorney sternly.

"Merely that you do not seem to have noticed that Counsel for Defence questioned me about 'the deceased' in every instance, and that my replies were in regard to the 'deceased,' " answered the defendant calmly.

Here the Judge gave her a searching glance from under his heavy brows, turned away, then looked again.

"Is this denial, madam," he asked, "merely an expression of your belief that the body found in the North River near the oyster scow was not that of Frances Fennimore Farrington?"

"Yes, your Honour," replied the defendant respectfully, and the Judge nodded to the District Attorney to go on with his questioning.

"We will have no quibbling with words now," said he, with a mocking bow to Harrison Wainright, who was watching his client in breathless suspense.

"Did you know Frances Fennimore Farrington, and did you have any relations of any sort whatever with Frances Fennimore Farrington?" asked the District Attorney very slowly, very distinctly.

"I did."

"How well did you know her?"

"Very well indeed. I was the closest friend she ever had in her life."

"Were you not jealous of Frances Fennimore Farrington?"

"I was."

Here the District Attorney dived into the pig-skin bag and brought forth a long narrow parcel, and, unfastening it, he spread upon his table a large number of cancelled cheques.

"You say that you sent cheques to John Henderson in Cincinnati in order that he might cash them for you. Were those cheques made out to your name?" he asked.

"They were not."

"To whom were they made out?"

"To the name of 'F. Farrington.' "

"Are these the cheques?" and he handed the parcel to her, which she examined carefully.

"To the best of my knowledge and belief, these are the cheques," she answered.

The District Attorney took back the cheques. "Have you examined the backs of these cheques and noted that they have written on the backs of them 'Pay to the order of H. St. John'?"

"I have noticed that."

"They have also been re-endorsed, have they not, by 'H. St. John'?"

"They have."

"Yet you have said that you yourself sent these cheques to John Henderson in order that he might cash them?" asked the District Attorney, and now he got out a sheet of paper from the pig-skin bag and laid it on the table with the cheques.

"I have so testified," replied the witness.

There was now a whispered conversation between the District Attorney and his assistant, who stepped over to one of the hand-

writing experts who had been on the stand. Three cheques and the sheet of paper were placed in the expert's hands, evidently for his close inspection, and the District Attorney said suddenly to the witness—

"Is this your dress?" He seized the brown broadcloth from under the table and shook it so that the noise of its rustle was heard all over the room.

"It is my dress," answered the witness.

"Did you wear it on the night of February 15th?"

"I did.

"Did you, wearing this dress, go in a cab to call at the house of Mrs. Herbert in Washington Square?"

"I did.

"Did you not then go up to the rooms of Frances Fennimore Farrington, and take her away with you in the same cab to the dock of the White Star Line in West Street?"

"I did go up to the rooms of Frances Fennimore Farrington, but she was not there awaiting me."

"Did you not drive in that same cab which waited outside for you to Pier 48, or thereabouts, at the foot of West Eleventh Street?"

"I did.

"Was not Frances Fennimore Farrington with you in that cab?"

"There was not a human soul in that cab but myself."

"Word-juggler! Was there, then, a *human body* in that cab with you?"

"No. And besides, Frances Fennimore Farrington could hardly be said to have a body."

"Was the poor woman, then, so thin as that, after your persecution of her?" asked the District Attorney, in a tone of pity for the deceased and of biting sarcasm for the living.

"Yes," answered the witness confidingly; "she was so very thin that I should think even you might have seen through her."

The District Attorney brushed his hand through the air, as though to sweep away this reflection on his perspicacity, and he began again.

"Were you in Bethune Street in the early morning of February 15th?"

"I was."

"Why did you, before going there from the pier, cover up the brown dress you were wearing with a long black broadcloth coat?"

"Because I considered my brown dress too conspicuous, and I wished to avoid attention."

"When did you give this same black coat to Miss Helen Morton, as you have testified?"

"I gave it to her about the last of February."

"So it was some time after the disappearance of Frances Farrington that you gave Miss Morton the coat?" And now the face of the District Attorney was wreathed in sardonic smiles, and that of Harrison Wainright grew tense.

"Oh, yes."

"Did you not give it to Miss Morton because you found it an inconvenient thing to have about you, and in order to divert suspicion from yourself?"

"Suspicion of what?" asked the witness.

"Suspicion of murder!" screamed the District Attorney; while the witness answered quietly—

"No, I did not wish to divert any suspicion of anything. I gave the coat to Miss Morton because I saw she needed it to wear back and forth at night for the theatre where she was playing."

Now the District Attorney smiled again—the smile of perfect security.

"Did you not meet a man in Bethune Street and get into his cab with him?"

"I did."

"Just as you got into the cab with the man, did he not say to you, 'Is it over?' "

"He did."

"Did you not answer, 'Yes, she is dead'?"

"I did."

"Who was it that you assured him was dead?"

"Mr. District Attorney," said the witness, looking at him intently with unwavering eyes, "I grant you that the question you have now asked me is a most portentous one, and I say to you that the time for asking that question was long ago. It should have been asked me, not by you, but by the Grand Jury, before whom I had supposed you would take me before attempting to arrest me! I say it was within your discretion, Mr. District Attorney, to have asked me to appear before the Grand Jury, who could have put to me such questions as were necessary to elicit my explanation before I was indicted."

"And what would you have explained?" asked the District Attorney, calmly fixing the witness with his glasses, and not a whit taken aback by this diatribe.

"I would have explained to the satisfaction of the Grand Jury that I was not guilty of *Murder in the first degree!*" was the cool answer.

And now every ear in the court-room and every eye was strained to attention, for it seemed evident that the defendant was about to plead to a lesser degree of homicide or to manslaughter.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE CONFESSION

The District Attorney picked up one of his bottles of smelling salts, walked directly in front of the witness, and propounded a question.

"I demand that yon answer this question without quibbling. Where were you on the many nights when you remained away from the Hotel Illington, leaving your dog in charge of Annette Lemoyne, and instructing her not to mention the fact of your being away all night?"

"I was at the house of Mrs. Herbert in Washington Square."

"It is false!" shouted the District Attorney.

"I have answered your question 'without quibbling' as you directed," returned the witness, sitting unconcernedly back in her chair.

Despairingly the District Attorney sat down and mopped his brow, and up sprang Harrison Wainright. "Miss Allison, if the District Attorney has finished his cross-examination, I will begin my re-direct. Explain to me immediately what you said you could have explained to the Grand Jury had you been called before them previous to your indictment."

"Sit down!" The District Attorney was again on his feet. "Counsel for Defence

has no right to interfere at this stage. I have not finished my cross-examination, nor will I have done so in many hours! Let this witness make her explanation to me. I now ask you," he said, turning again to the defendant, "what it is you would have explained if you had been called before the Grand Jury?"

The witness inclined her head slightly toward the District Attorney and answered calmly—

"I would have explained that I was but guilty of justifiable homicide."

A thrill of horror ran through the court-room, although it was noticeable that not one of the gentlewomen spectators got up to go, and so escape from the details of the killing which the defendant now seemed to be upon the point of narrating. There was a groan from the District Attorney, an increasing interest in the attitude of Harrison Wainright, and another sip of water for the Judge before he turned again fairly to the left to look keenly at the defendant.

"Go on!" commanded the District Attorney.

"I would have explained that it was I who was responsible for the appearance of Frances Fennimore Farrington in this country, that I introduced her here, that I helped her to win a name, that only through me could she live and have her being. In a word, that I was her creator! And what did she do to me in return for all my kindness?"

Here the defendant seemed overcome with the memory of the ingratitude of her beneficiary, and she drew forth her handkerchief from her coat-pocket and wiped her eyes, then striving after calmness.

"Yes!" screeched the District Attorney, "what did this poor unfortunate woman do to you? I ask you to tell!"

"Well, not content with what I freely gave her, she was taking from me all I had. I say to you that this foreign woman, who, with my own aid, had sprung up suddenly, unheralded, in this my native land, endangered my happiness, my liberty, the very breath of my literary life! My own serious work was rejected, hers was accepted, and then she must needs also become a *comédienne*. At first I only tried to humble her by ruining her reputation, but it was useless, for, badly as she finally began to write, her stories continued to be published. And then I took from her her existence, for she had lived too long. There was not room for the two of us in New York. It came to the point where one of us had to die. I decided that the one must be Frances Fennimore Farrington! But I did not drown her! I merely swept her from the face of the literary earth, as one of your witnesses once heard me threaten to do!"

The defendant paused under the fierce glare of the District Attorney, and through the court-room there ran a whisper of—

"Hypnotism! She was a sort of Svengali to another Trilby!"

"Go on!" commanded the District Attorney.

"And now, Mr. District Attorney," continued the witness, "through the zealous work of your office I have been brought to the Bar of Justice, and I am now ready to pay whatever penalty you can find that the Statute Books of the State of New York prescribe for the crime of killing off one's *nom de plume*——"

"You mean to say——," cried Harrison Wainright, leaping through the little gate.

"That I myself was Frances Fennimore Farrington!"

"Your Honour!" cried the District Attorney, "I submit to you that this woman is demented! I move that your Honour adjourn this court, and appoint a Commission in Lunacy to inquire into the mind——"

"Silence!" interrupted his Honour. "The Court is most certainly in favour of the appointment of a Commission in Lunacy, but *not* to inquire into the mind of this defendant!" and with a resounding crash of his gavel he glowered at the District Attorney.

"Your Honour!" gasped Harrison Wainright, visions of disbarment for contempt floating through his brain, "I beg to assure your Honour that I did not know——"

"Let not Counsel for Defence fear for one instant that the Court gives him credit for having possessed any intelligence whatsoever!" and down again came the gavel, threatening to bring forth sparks and splinters from the judicial desk.

The court-room was in an uproar, and vainly the Clerk shouted for "Order!" Vainly his Honour swung his gavel. Excited newspaper reporters rushed from the tables, each one bent upon getting out to the telephone and telegraph-booths to send the first news of the amazing disclosure to his paper, and within fifteen minutes their messages hot from the printing presses, were on the streets in special extras.

As the reporters rushed out, a crowd which the door-keepers had been holding at bay now surged in and took whatever seats they could find. Margaret on the witness stand, looking toward the entrance door, saw Carolyn Blaine pushing in, her face one broad smile of triumph, as she held Annette Lemoyne by the hand; then the Little Dominie, and close upon him Sam Blackmore. A loving welcome leapt from her eyes to his, and then it was as though she was pleading with him. There came, too, the gaunt form of John Henderson, and the two men engaged in a hurried whispered conversation in which some important point seemed to be settled, for immediately there was the faintest nod from Blackmore toward Margaret. Then with a look of content she leaned back in her chair and waited for the uproar to subside.

Now, with continuous shouts and thumpings, order was restored. Counsel for The People and Counsel for Defence had been crushed by the judicial wrath, and the Judge and the jury were left to try the case.

"Madam," said his Honour, bowing to the defendant, "will you now tell the story of the circumstances which have led to your present position? The Court and the members of the jury will put to you such questions as seem necessary during your narrative."

"Your Honour," said Margaret, "more than four years ago I first thought of taking a pseudonym for certain work of a serious and high-class nature which my ed-

itors would not publish. I had made my name as a humorist, and because I had so become a popular writer, they desired that I should continue to wear the cap and bells. I knew the other work which they rejected was good, although they assured me that it was not. So, for a long time I turned over in my mind the matter of doing all my serious work under another name, but I came to no positive decision until about two years ago.

"Your Honour doubtless knows that for the past half-dozen years I have been a frequent visitor to court-rooms and prisons in search of local colour for my writings. Many things which I have seen and heard during these visits long ago convinced me that the methods of criminal procedure were greatly in need of reform, and most especially have I seen that our system of prosecution was a bad one; that the District Attorney's office, instead of trying always to discover the truth, made it merely a business to convict, as though the number of convictions, no matter how obtained, were a matter for congratulation. Most especially have I become an opponent of circumstantial evidence as a trustworthy thing, and I have believed that an absolutely innocent person could be so entangled in a net of circumstances pointing to guilt that he might be indicted, tried, convicted, and imprisoned or electrocuted for a crime which he never committed. Between two and three years ago certain matters concerning the District Attorney's office came to my attention, which strengthened this belief of mine, and I tried to think out a plan by which I myself might be accused of being concerned in the disappearance of a person who never existed."

"You planned all this from the beginning, then, madam?" questioned his Honour, with darkening brow.

"Yes, Your Honour, I planned it up to a certain point, though I could not plan the strange coincidences that came up in the meantime. I did not plan to have a body found in the North River. I did not plan to be actually arrested for murder. I believed, however, that I could carry the thing out so far that I would be commanded to appear before the Grand Jury and tell what I knew of the woman who was supposed to be missing.

"When I finally decided to take a *nom de plume,* I remembered that during my visits to England I had, without even trying to do so, passed as an Englishwoman, and I knew that when I so desired I could speak with a perfect English intonation. So I decided that Frances Fennimore Farrington —name I made up of three names of which I am very fond—should be an Englishwoman, and I heard of Mrs. Herbert's lodging house. Just at this time, too, I discovered, one night in dressing my hair before my mirror, that I could make myself look like an altogether different person by a change in hair dressing, and I knew, of course, as every woman knows, that gowns of perpendicular stripes add greatly to one's apparent height. I also took the precaution to wear false soles nearly an inch thick inside my boots. Then I took lodgings at Mrs. Herbert's, being there a part of the time and at my hotel a part of the time.

"It was an easy matter for me to provide myself with long loose coats which I could slip on and off easily, and as Miss Farrington I always wore high hats. Frequently I took advantage of the free dressing-rooms in the department stores in order to make a sudden change of costume. As Frances Farrington, a tall Englishwoman, I would go in at one door, and within a few minutes I emerged at another door, or even by the same door, as Margaret Allison, wearing a blue Russian blouse suit, a soft hat which I could easily crush into a small parcel with the suit or the long coat, and with my hair dressed in an altogether different style.

"As Margaret Allison, sometimes with my dog, I went into Mrs. Herbert's house with a latch-key, carefully, of course, and neither she nor Harriet ever saw me except as Miss Farrington. It is true that, as Counsel for Defence so aptly suggested, few persons seemed to have got a look at Miss Farrington except at the back, for naturally I concealed my face as much as possible in entering or going out of the house. But one morning, in a spirit of fun, I did venture to speak to Mary Gallagher, the scullery-maid in the next house. I wore a heavy veil, and it was foggy, and I am sure she could not get a distinct view of my face.

"In regard to my literary aspirations, my plan succeeded perfectly, as Your Honour is aware. I made Frances Fennimore Farrington known first as a writer of serious stories, then of a book, then a play. I also, after a sort of challenge that was given to me at a garden party, sent out some humorous stories under the name of Farrington, and thus gave rise to the gossip that Miss Farrington was even making a name in my own original field, which led to the accusation that I was jealous of her.

"Finally, after two years, I decided that she had lived long enough, most especially as I was now about to be married, and had been recognized as myself by my fiancé, who went to call on the supposed Englishwoman, in order to transact some business with her."

Here the defendant's eyes lighted up mischievously, and rested for an instant on the twitching face of her lover in the back of the room, for he was one who could enjoy a joke against himself. No one in the room noted the interchange of looks, and the Court addressed the witness.

"You left Mrs. Herbert's house about midnight of February 15th, did you not, intending to sail for England?"

"No, Your Honour, I gave Mrs. Herbert that impression, but I planned to leave my trunks at the dock, to see what action the authorities would take when it was discovered they had not been claimed."

"You then wore the brown dress which you have identified as yours, and went to the dock in a cab?" asked one of the jurors.

"Yes."

"But you said there was nobody in the cab but yourself, and yet the cabman swore he heard talking!" protested the juror.

"I said there was no other *human* soul or body in the cab," smiled the defendant. "My dog was in the cab. I had left him in my rooms at Mrs. Herbert's, and locked the door, telling him not to make the slightest noise, and he understood perfectly, for he had often been there before when he had to keep quiet. He jumped into the cab before the cabman, who was half asleep and half drunk, had aroused himself. In the cab I spoke to the dog, accusing him of

'cupboard love' because he was very affectionate, while I suspected him of having designs on a small package of candies I had in my purse."

With a grin, the inquiring juror settled back in the sixth chair of the box, and up rose the District Attorney, with white, set face.

"Is it over?" "Yes, she is dead!" he quoted in challenging tones. "What was over, and who was dead?"

Now the defendant hesitated. The merry look left her eyes, as she answered softly—

"The little sister of Peter Dennison was dead, little Mamie, who suffered with hip disease, yet whom I could always brighten up by taking my dog to her, for she loved to see him doing his tricks. I got an urgent message telling me she was crying for me and Captain Jinks, and as soon as possible I went there in Bethune Street, getting out of the cab at Pier 48. But it was all over when I arrived. She was dead, and, not to disturb her family, I went outside and waited for my fiancé, to whom I had given the address where he would find me, telling him the circumstances."

"You appear to meet your fiancé at strange hours, one o'clock in the morning!" sneered the District Attorney.

"He was going away on a ship that morning, and it was my only opportunity to bid him good-bye."

"Who is this fiancé!" shouted the District Attorney.

Margaret gave a terrified look of appeal toward the back of the room, for she saw her lover's face turn white. Henderson's hand went on his shoulder to detain him in his seat. Then Margaret said something to the Judge in a whisper.

"Mr. District Attorney," said the Court, "the defendant is excused from answering your question."

"Who is 'H. St. John'?" asked Juror number 4.

"My friend Mr. John Henderson, who has known me since I was a schoolgirl, took that name for the purpose of arranging a place of deposit for my checks. It was something of a joke, as he has always been known among his intimate friends as 'Saint John.' He went through a form which gave him a certificate to carry on business as Henderson St. John, or H. St. John. The detective sent to Ohio might have found such a record in the court house at Cincinnati."

Now the defendant did not look toward the back of the room, and no one suspected that her accessory was among her auditors.

Juror number 10 rose. He was Martin Ellsworth Cummings, of grave demeanor and courtly bearing. "I would like to inquire, Miss Allison," he said, "if you took your friend, Miss Blaine, into your confidence concerning your nom de plume?" He looked straight into Margaret's eyes, as though much depended upon her answer.

"No," she replied, "Miss Blaine knew nothing about it. I took no one into my confidence except Mr. Henderson."

"Ah! Thank you, Miss Allison!" said Cummings, as though the assurance had comforted him, and his eyes, roving over the court room, rested on Carolyn in a look of understanding comradeship.

"That body, Madam! That body found near the oyster scow!" exclaimed Juror number 3 excitedly. "You cannot explain that away! The same dress, the same hat, the same underwear!"

"Yes, Madam!" Now His Honour looked at her half kindly, half sternly. "What do you know of the body?"

"Your Honour, I did not know a body had been found until after I was arrested and lodged in prison. By the orders of the District Attorney the news was held back from the newspapers for twenty-four hours. I first knew of it when a special extra of the evening paper was handed to me in the Tombs, and late that night another special extra of one of the papers announced that on reading the account I had turned sick and had almost fainted, the supposition being that all this was because of my guilt. I did turn sick and faint at the knowledge that such a body had been found, because at once I believed it must be the body of Marie Dupont, a friend of Annette Lemoyne, and——"

A piercing cry rang through the room, coming from the direction of the farthest window,

"Marie! Eet ees poor Marie, Mr. Judge! She must kill her poor self for that bad man!" and the face of Annette was buried in Carolyn Blaine's lap.

"Your Honour," continued Margaret chokingly, "I can only tell you that a little over a week before I was arrested, I gave to Annette Lemoyne the striped dress, the hat, the shoes, the underwear, which I had taken off at the Illington, when I changed for the brown broadcloth, because she told me of a friend of hers who was quite destitute, all her clothing having been kept by a boarding-house keeper because she could not pay her board. I should be inclined to think that she may have committed suicide, but I know nothing more than this. On the morning of the day of my arrest, Annette Lemoyne told me that her friend had disappeared, and it was my intention to try to trace her. Had I known of the finding of this body before my arrest, I would have given such information as I had to the authorities, and I would have explained then the mystery of Frances Farrington.

"But, Your Honour, this was kept from me. When I read of it at the Tombs, for a moment I was tempted to tell what I knew, and to explain my own position, and then I resolved that I would not. I saw that here was my opportunity to show to the world what a damning thing circumstantial evidence could be. I could not do the poor creature any good then by disclosing what I knew or what I suspected, but I might do humanity good by awaiting the results of the District Attorney's misplaced zeal."

Now she rose, forgetting that she was addressing His Honour, and her eyes swept the room, resting scornfully upon the District Attorney.

"Circumstantial evidence! See what it has done! A chain, a perfect chain of it was promised to you, Gentlemen of the Jury, by this learned District Attorney, a chain that should convict me of the crime of murdering—deliberately, cruelly—a woman who never existed! A spy is set upon

me to invade the privacy of my home; old-time enemies are hunted up; the history of my pet dog investigated, as if that were of the slightest importance; the records of my childhood days brought forth, to show that as a babbling schoolgirl I was groping after truth; a mangled body is found in the North River, wearing a dress such as another woman was said to have worn, and underclothes that can be bought in Paris by the scores and hundreds! Medical experts differing concerning the age of that woman with a difference of twenty years, for between the ages of twenty-five and forty-five years there are circumstances under which the highest science is helpless and can give no certainty as to age! The Coroner says she was in the water five weeks, yet her eyes were hazel after those five weeks—a scientific impossibility, as the ambitious young doctor from Bellevue bravely told you! If this dead woman was Marie Dupont, she could not have been in the water more than a week. Ah! But Frances Fennimore Farrington was supposed to have disappeared on February 15th, so the Prosecution in its wisdom influences the mind of the Coroner's Physician to such an extent that perhaps he actually believes that the time has been five weeks! I turn red in the face when I am arrested—from suppressed laughter at the absurdity of the thing—and it is taken as an evidence of my guilt! Yet, at the time of my arrest, the only important thing that was done or said was entirely overlooked and misunderstood by the officer making the arrest. Right close at my side was this pet dog, this trick, pick-pocket dog, who has learned to obey my slightest command at the word 'Three!' in four different languages, and into this dog's mouth I forced two scraps of paper which I took from the bosom of my dress while the officer stood there—a letter which I did not wish to be found when I was searched, as I knew I would be. before my entrance to the Tombs. 'Trois!' was what I said, instead of 'Ah!' or 'What!' as the officer reported, and my pick-pocket dog ate up that letter, which might have been a most incriminating document! Oh, the carelessness of your emissaries, Mr. District Attorney! 'A digestive tablet to her dog!' said you in your eloquent address to the jury! Yes, Mr. District Attorney, for he was not used to such diet as that!"

Now a smile played upon the face of the defendant, as she sat down breathless—a smile which communicated itself to the whole room and broadened almost into a chuckle. With crimson face the District Attorney rose.

"Your Honour," he said, with shaking voice, "if this defendant is, as she has said, herself Frances Fennimore Farrington, how is it that Mrs. Herbert, when in this court-room, did not recognize her as her late lodger?"

"Let the defendant answer you!" and the Judge bowed to her.

"The District Attorney forgets that Mrs Herbert mistook the broad ruler which Counsel held up to her for a lead-pencil. Mrs. Herbert is very near-sighted," answered the defendant.

"Let Mrs. Herbert be brought into the court-room, close to the defendant!" commanded His Honour.

Suddenly Margaret threw from her shoulders the long black silk coat which she had been wearing throughout the trial; then she ducked her head, feverishly pulling out tortoise-shell hair-pins; then, with a deft twist of her fingers, she built up coil upon coil of her auburn hair till her coiffure towered hillock upon hillock, ascending mountain-like. Over her forehead she pulled some stray locks of hair, bang-wise, and as Mrs. Herbert was led into the court-room, there stood a lady tall of stature, with hair dressed beautifully high, though somewhat unbecomingly, clothed in a striped gown. Close to this lady now they led Mrs. Herbert, until she might touch her hand.

"Look at this lady, Mrs. Herbert. Do you know her?" asked the Judge.

"'Er Ladyship!" cried Mrs. Herbert, falling back into the arms of the attendant who had led her in.

Now his Honour looked again at the defendant, and his face was sternly kind, as he sat there cherub-like, the flowing sleeves of his silk gown spread out like wings, protective-wise. Then lightning flashed from his eyes, which, travelling toward the District Attorney, struck that gentleman dumb.

"The prisoner is discharged!"

"But, your Honour, my dog!" cried Margaret. "They will try to keep him here and wind him up in yards of red tape."

"Let this lady's dog be brought in the court-room and delivered over to her," and down thumped the gavel again.

And now bounded into the court-room Captain Jinks, leaping lightly over the gate-barrier and springing toward his lady. A pat, a caressing whisper, "We are going now, Captain Jinks"——But what was that? The dog pricked up his long black curly ears, then jumped away from the chair where sat his lady, to the centre of the fenced-off enclosure—to Captain Jinks the ring, the circus ring; and now he bowed to his lady, to the judge and the jury, as in through the open window from the street below there wheezed some laboured notes, yet tuneful, ground from a hand-organ by an Italian:—

"I am Captain Jinks of the horse marines."

Captain Jinks put forward his left paw, then his right, and marched solemnly the length of the enclosure four-footed; then up on his hind legs, gradually, gracefully, he rose, and back and forth he walked in time with the music, which came to him so plainly and bade him do his favourite "turn." Now he began dancing, touching his top-knot with his paw, then paraded full dress.

He got through the first verse as he remembered it. He had shown in pantomime some of the gallantries of the gay captain in the army. There was a pause in the music from below, and Captain Jinks paused also. Again the organ piped up, and he began to illustrate another verse. He showed how "tailor's bills came in so fast" and how "mama she cried," and then he hesitated, looking about inquiringly at judge and jury, counsel and reporters. Then his soft brown eyes gazed reproachfully at his lady, saying "You must remember that here is where I need the cigar." Hopefully he marched over to the District Attorney, who stood disconsolately twirling a long slip of cardboard in his hand. "Wuff! Wuff!" said Captain Jinks. But was ever gentleman so inattentive to the wants of his entertainer? Captain Jinks brought his nose

close to the twirling cardboard, then his teeth closed over it.

Again up rose Captain Jinks triumphant. He had his cigar. He clasped his paws tightly over his chest, as puff-puff went his mouth over the long cardboard labelled "Exhibit A," and thus he illustrated the final acts in the history of his celebrated namesake.

The organ-grinder went his way, the "turn" was over, and Captain Jinks bowed to his audience, all of whom, including His Honour himself, had forgotten court decorum. The Judge had stood up, the better to watch the performance, unconsciously beating time with his forefinger, his great form shaking with laughter at this entirely appropriate ending to what the District Attorney had termed a farce. In such case there could be no order, and though court was not yet formally adjourned, the crowd began surging out of the doors, for it had become known that Harrison Wainright had, by a smart manœuvre, got Margaret Allison and her dog into a private room, where they were joined by Sam Blackmore, and hurried in a motor-car to the home of the Little Dominie, who had gone on before.

Regardless of rules and ordinary procedure, the men in the jury-box chatted together, giving their various opinions.

"A purely primeval woman!" said the foreman.

"Primeval! I should call her mightily up to date! A woman with a noble work to do, and she's done it against fierce odds!"

"What work?"

"Why, to clean up the District Attorney's office. It's needed sweeping for years. Gad! The learned Prosecutor seems to have disappeared, hasn't he? He'll resign now, since she's proven her contention that the Law's a Hass! He'll give up his ambitions for a judgeship, too, that's sure!"

"A great woman, great and good!" remarked Juror No. 3 again. "She forgot herself and worked for humanity's sake—to show that circumstantial evidence was no evidence at all."

"Humanity nothing! She was just a she-bear defending her cub!"

"It wasn't even defence," said Juror No. 6. "It was revenge, downright feminine spite!"

"Yes," piped Juror No. 8, "it was to pay up the District Attorney for trying to indict the mining engineer, Blackmore, two years ago. It seems they were engaged then, and had to put off their marriage on account of it."

"Gentlemen," said Ellsworth Cummings, gravely, "a motive is never simple. It is always complex, and only God can separate it into its component parts. Therefore, let us render our verdict that the mystery of Frances Farrington remains a mystery, and that it is deeper than ever before!"

And now the Judge passed out, and there came the voice of the Crier—

"Hear ye! Hear ye! All persons having business with Part I Supreme Court, held in and for the City and County and the State of New York, may now depart! This Court stands adjourned until ten thirty o'clock to-morrow morning!"

THE END.